

HARRY HARRISON
CARLOS EZQUERRA KELVIN GOSNELL

The Stainless Steel Rat

COLOR OMNIBUS



Creator/Writer

Harry Harrison

Script

Kelvin Gosnell

Artist

Carlos Ezquerro

Colours

Janet Landau

Letters

Jack Potter

Pete Knight



Creative Director and CEO: Jason Kingsley

Chief Technical Officer: Chris Kingsley

Head of Publishing: Ben Smith

Publishing Manager: Beth Lewis

2000 AD Editor in Chief: Matt Smith

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Archivists: Charlene Taylor & Tom Duckham

Original Commissioning Editor: Steve MacManus

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No.1**

The Stainless Steel Rat

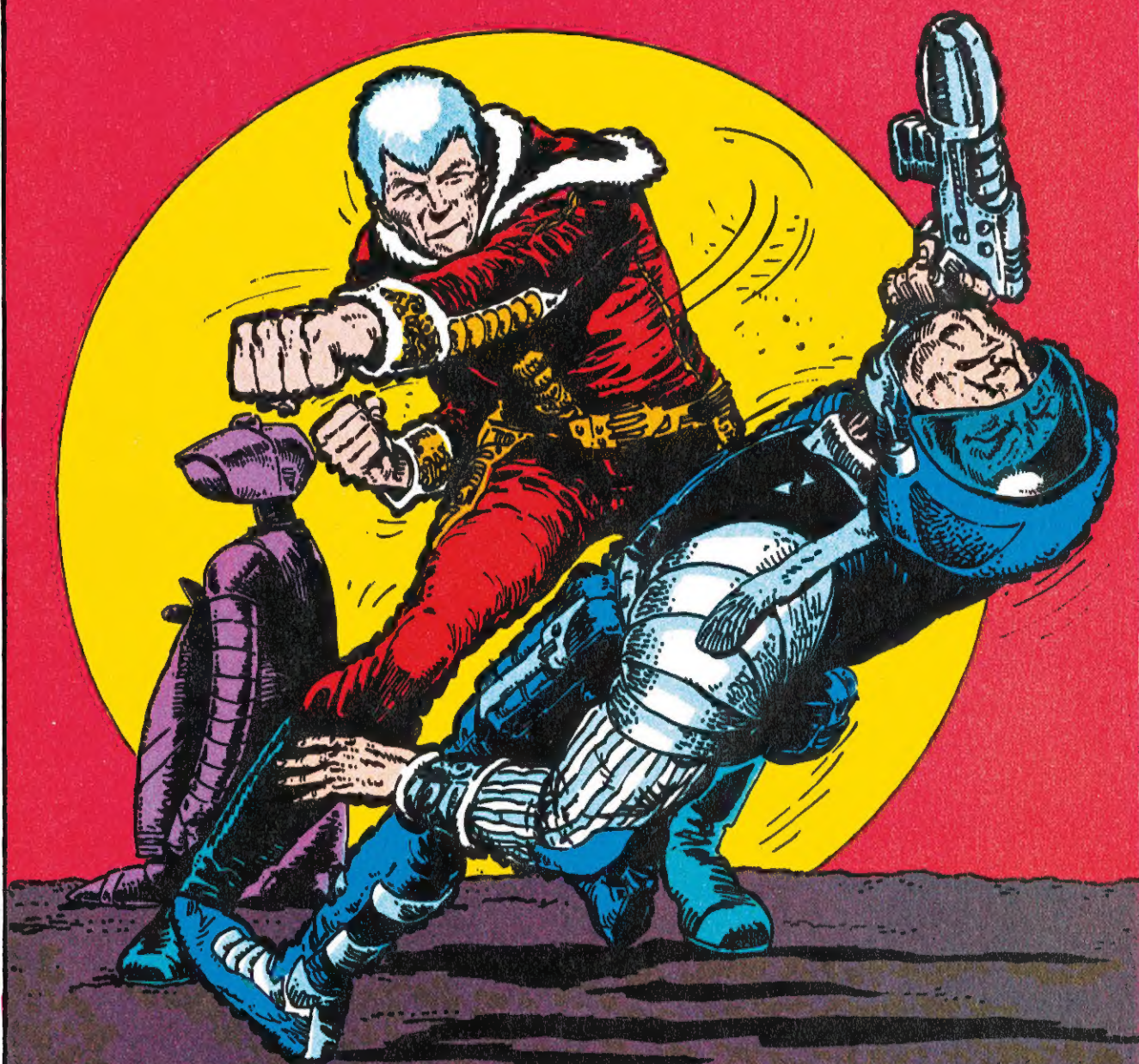
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The Stainless Steel Rat issue 1 cover, art by Carlos Ezquerra, 1985



The Stainless Steel Rat



EZQUERRA

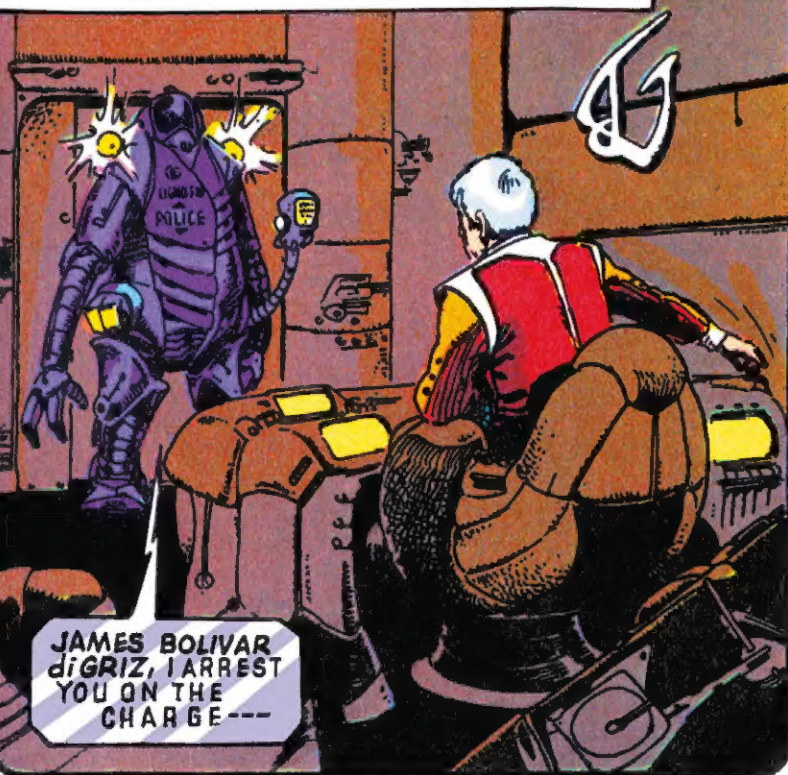
ADAPTATION:
KELVIN GOSNELL

ART:
CARLOS EZQUERRA

LETTERING:
JACK POTTER

COLOR:
JANET LANDAU.

In the rich union of worlds that will be the Galactic Empire of the far future, CRIME will be virtually UNKNOWN! 99% of criminals will indulge in PETTY crime—stupid, thoughtless acts which the efficient police will easily detect and punish. There will, however, be that OTHER 1%.....

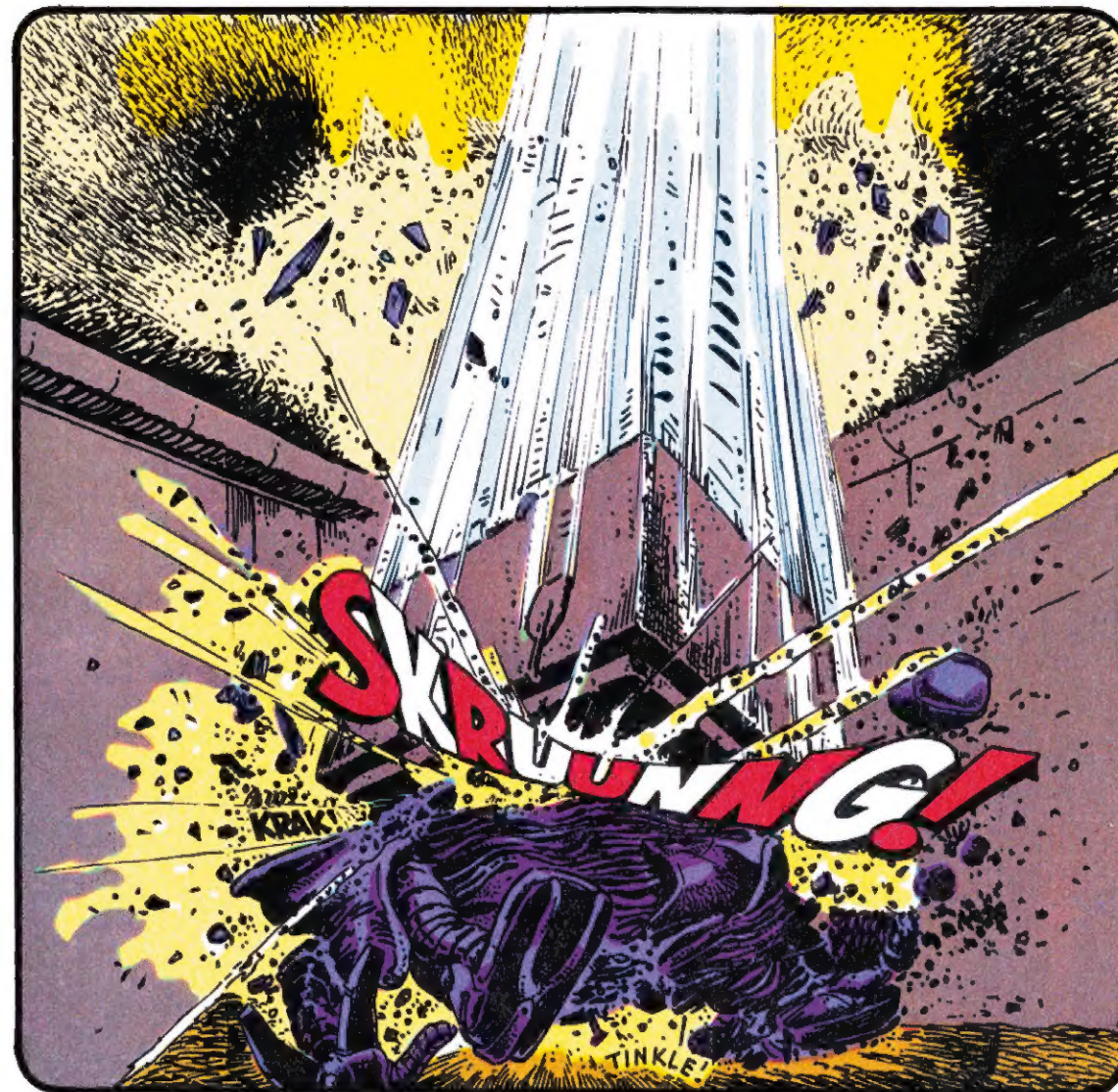


JAMES BOLIVAR
McGRIZ, I ARREST
YOU ON THE
CHARGE---

AS SOON AS THE POLICE ROBOT WALKED THROUGH THE DOOR, I KNEW MY RACKET WAS BLOWN. BUT I WAS READY FOR HIM. I WAITED FOR HIM TO SAY THE WORD 'CHARGE' BEFORE I FIRED THE EXPLOSIVE CHARGE IN THE CEILING. I'M KINDA POETIC AT HEART...



--- OF
ILLEGAL
ENTRY--
CRIMINAL
DAMAGE--
FRAUD---

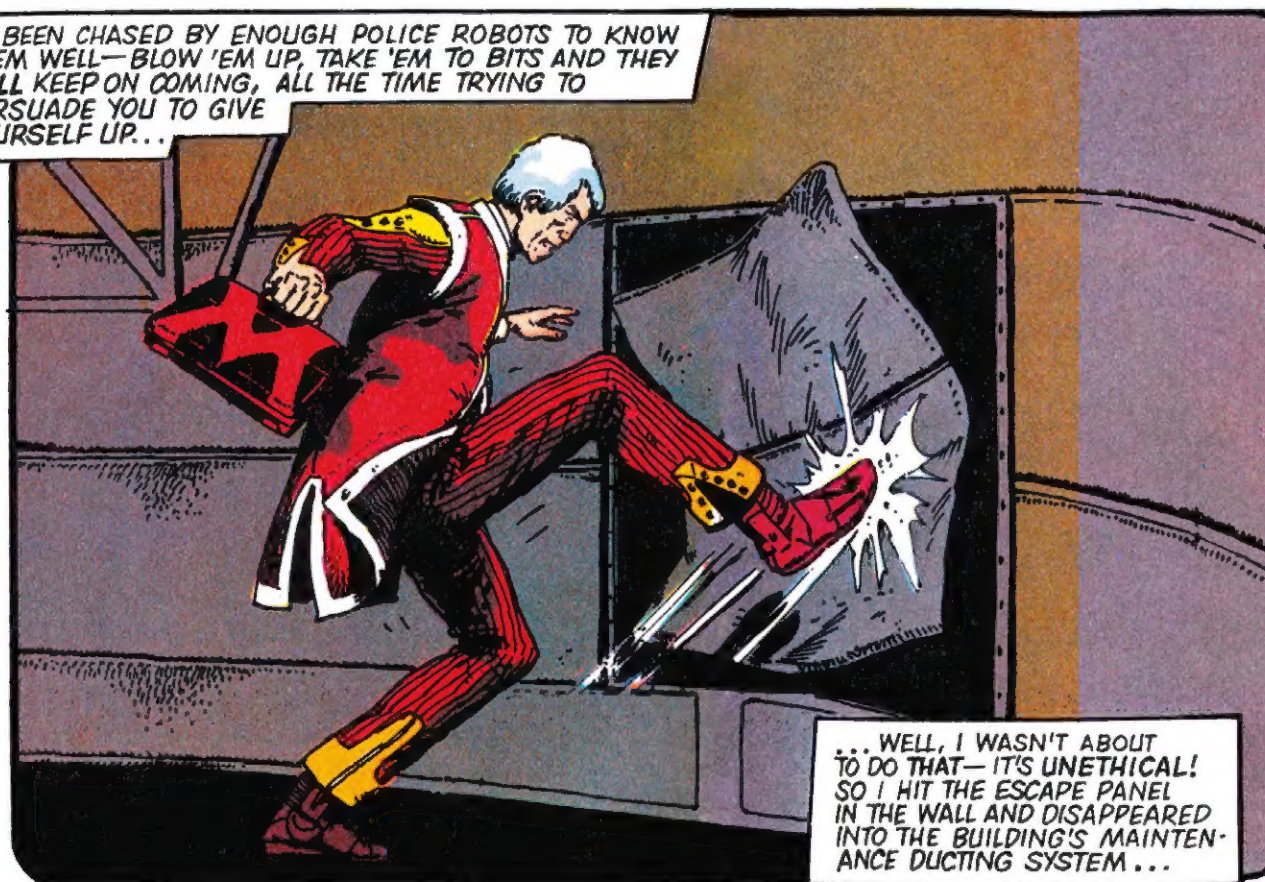


--- AND ASSAULTING
A POLICE ROBOT!
THE LAST MISDEMEANOUR
BEING VERY FOOLISH--
SINCE MY BRAIN CIRCUITS
ARE IN MY ARMoured
MIDSECTION



BUT YOUR LITTLE
TWO-WAY RADIO,
GEORGE, IS IN THE
TOP OF YOUR RECENTLY-
ASSAULTED HEAD--
AND I DON'T WANT
YOU REPORTING TO
YOUR FRIENDS YET!

I'D BEEN CHASED BY ENOUGH POLICE ROBOTS TO KNOW THEM WELL--BLOW 'EM UP, TAKE 'EM TO BITS AND THEY STILL KEEP ON COMING, ALL THE TIME TRYING TO PERSUADE YOU TO GIVE YOURSELF UP...



... WELL, I WASN'T ABOUT
TO DO THAT-- IT'S UNETHICAL!
SO I HIT THE ESCAPE PANEL
IN THE WALL AND DISAPPEARED
INTO THE BUILDING'S MAINTEN-
ANCE DUCTING SYSTEM...

AS I RAN DOWN THE GLEAMING
CORRIDOR, SOMETHING MADE ME
THINK OF THE FAIRY TALES I HEARD
AS A KID-- ABOUT CITIES OF THE
DISTANT PAST, CITIES BUILT OF WOOD
AND BRICKS, CITIES INFESTED WITH
SCURRYING LITTLE ANIMALS CALLED
RATS, LIVING BEHIND WALLS,
UNDER FLOORS... ANYWHERE
THEY COULD FIND A HOLE!



ON MY WAY OUT, I SAID
GOODBYE TO THE CAUSE
OF THE ROBOT'S VISIT—THE
PILE OF GOLD BARS WHICH
I'D BEEN REMOVING ONE
BY ONE FROM EACH LOAD
CARRIED IN THE BULLION
LIFT TO THE BANK NEXT
DOOR...

FAREWELL, MY
LITTLE GLEAMING
PALS. WE COULD
HAVE MADE SUCH
SWEET MUSIC...

BUT NOW JAMES d'GRIZ,
THE PAUNCHY BUSINESS
EXECUTIVE, HAD TO LOSE A
LITTLE WEIGHT AND GET A
CHANGE OF CLOTHES...

IT WAS SLIPPERY JIM—
THE STAINLESS STEEL RAT—
WHO HIT THE ROOF 2.49
MINUTES LATER, BREATHING
A SIGH OF RELIEF THAT THE
COPS WERE TOO STUPID TO
HAVE IT COVERED...

WHICH MEANT THAT I COULD
USE ESCAPE PLAN Z:
A SINGLE-FILAMENT WIRE TO
THE NEXT ROOF. STRONG
NERVES ARE A PART OF
THE JOB!

THE LOCAL FUZZ WERE MAKING A HELL
OF A FUSS WHEN I EMERGED. STILL, I
SUPPOSE THEY WERE ENJOYING ALL THE
UNACCUSTOMED EXCITEMENT— THEY
OUGHT TO THANK ME REALLY!

BUT IT ANNOYED ME, MY PLANS
GOING WRONG LIKE THAT. I'D HOPED
THAT BY REMOVING THE BARS ONE
AT A TIME THE BANK WOULDN'T
NOTICE THE LOSS TOO QUICKLY.
SOMETHING HAD GONE WRONG—
AND I SET THE GREY MATTER TO
WORK TRYING TO PUT
IT RIGHT

YEAH!
GOT TO
GET ME
A BIG
TRUCK...

ONE THING ABOUT POLICEMEN THROUGHOUT THE GALAXY—THEY DO LIKE COLLECTING EVIDENCE! SO, THAT NIGHT, WHEN THEIR ARMoured VAN ARRIVED TO PICK UP THE GOLD...

OKAY, THAT'S THE LOT. I'LL CLOSE HER UP—
OOPS! SORRY, GRANDAD!

THAT'S OKAY, SONNY...

NICE TO SEE YOUNG FOLKS SHOWING RESPECT FOR THEIR ELDERS. HERE... HAVE A SLEEP-GAS CAPSULE FOR YOUR TROUBLE!

THAT'S THE TROUBLE WITH THESE OVER-CIVILISED WORLDS—THEY DON'T UNDERSTAND **STYLE!**

SO LONG, SUCKERS!

CHOKE-GAG-

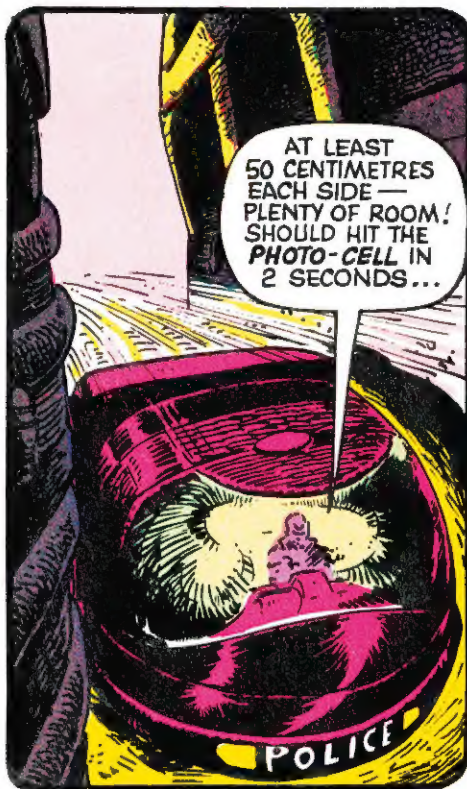
AND IF STEALING YOUR ILL-GOTTEN GAINS **BACK** FROM SOMEONE WHO'S JUST STOLEN THEM FROM **YOU** AIN'T GOT **STYLE**—WELL, I DON'T KNOW WHAT **HAS!**

THE MONOCYCLE GUARDS WERE QUICK OFF THE MARK. I COULD HAVE LOST THEM...

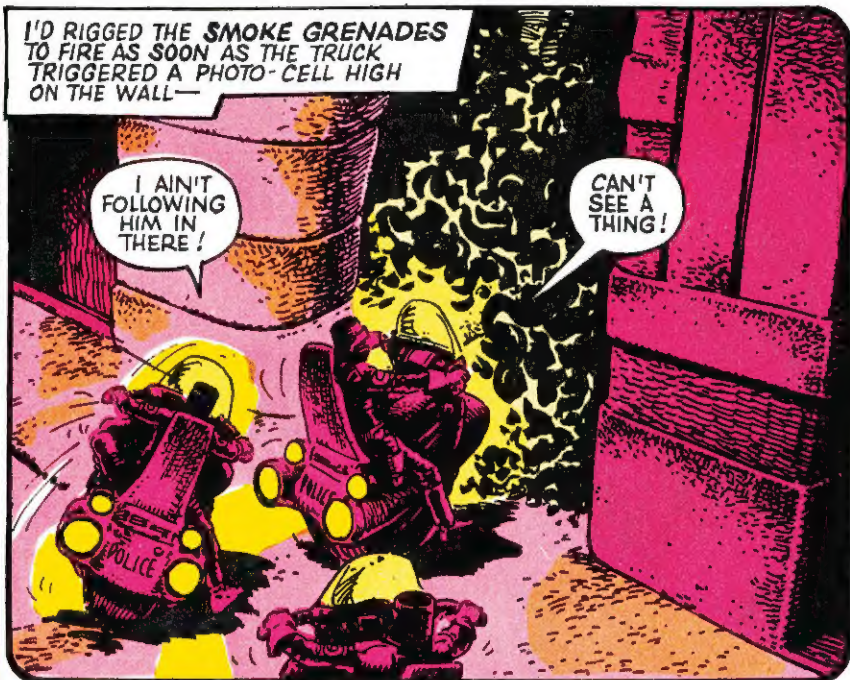
BUT I CHOSE TO KEEP THEM CLOSE BEHIND ME. IT APPEALED TO MY **SENSE OF HUMOUR!**

KEEP THOSE LIGHTS FLASHING, BOYS. I NEED A POLICE 'ESCORT' TO **CLEAR TRAFFIC** FOR ME!

HERE'S THE ALLEY! GOT TO TIME THIS JUST RIGHT...



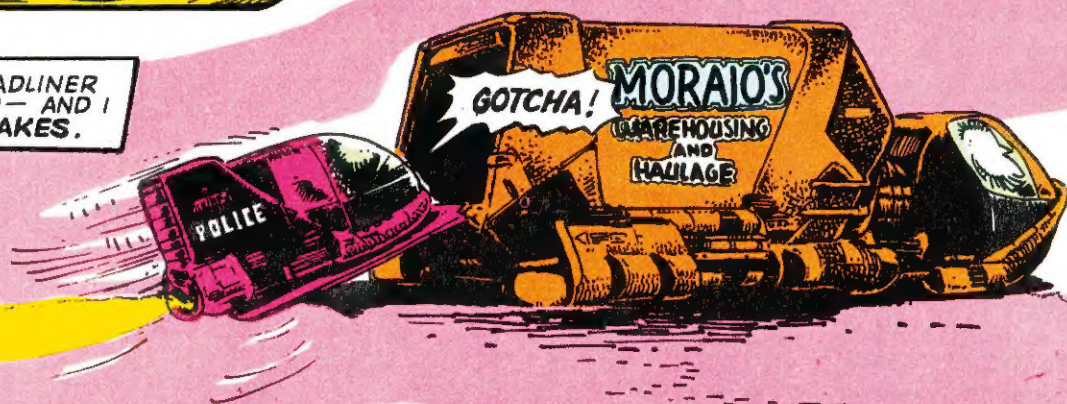
AT LEAST
50 CENTIMETRES
EACH SIDE —
PLENTY OF ROOM!
SHOULD HIT THE
PHOTO-CELL IN
2 SECONDS...



I AIN'T
FOLLOWING
HIM IN
THERE!

CAN'T
SEE A
THING!

THE BIG ROADLINER
LOOMED UP— AND I
HIT THE BRAKES.



GOTCHA!

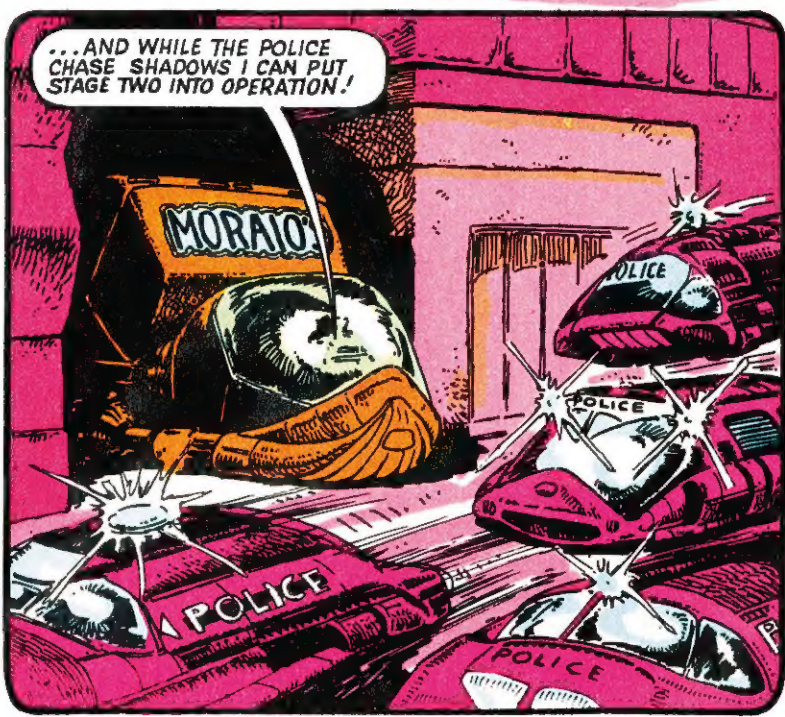
MORAIO'S
WAREHOUSING
AND
HAULAGE



OKAY, TIN BOY.
CLOSE THE DOOR
AND LOAD THE
CONTENTS OF THE
TRUCK INTO THE
CASES.

YES, SIR.

MORAIO'S
MORAIO'S



...AND WHILE THE POLICE
CHASE SHADOWS I CAN PUT
STAGE TWO INTO OPERATION!

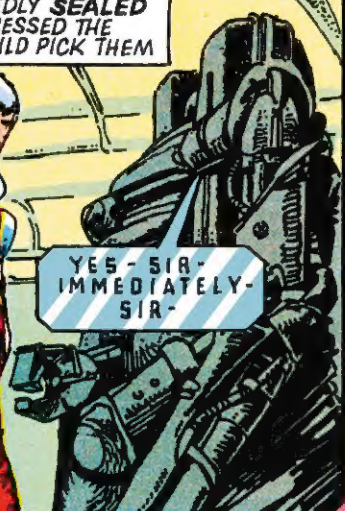
MORAIO'S

POLICE

POLICE

THE WAREHOUSE WAS ONLY A FEW BLOCKS AWAY. SOMETHING WAS WORRYING ME ABOUT IT— BUT, WELL, I GUESS I WAS TOO PLEASED WITH HOW SMOOTHLY THE JOB WAS GOING TO TAKE MUCH NOTICE.

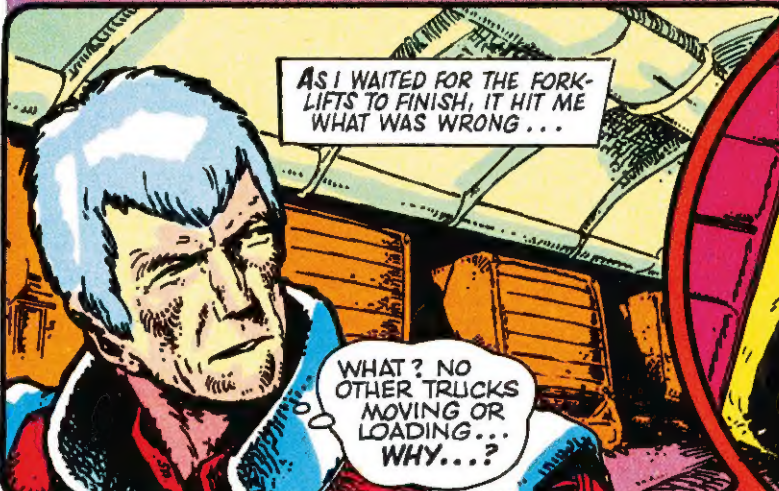
STILL, I THOUGHT I WAS BEING PRETTY NEAT. THE POLICE WOULD HAVE UNDOUBTEDLY SEALED OFF THE WHOLE TOWN. SO I'D ADDRESSED THE CASES OFF-PLANET, WHERE I COULD PICK THEM UP AT MY LEISURE!



I WAS PRETTY COCKY—MOST UN-RATLIKE. I SHOULD HAVE BEEN MORE CAREFUL!

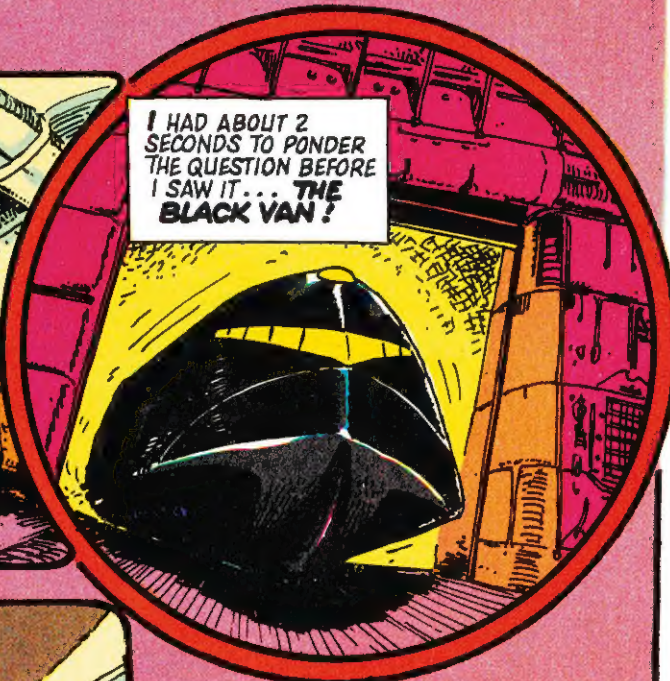
ONE OF YOUR METAL PALS MUST HAVE STRIPPED A GEAR AND SENT THIS LOAD TO THE WRONG ADDRESS. GET 'EM UNLOADED AND RE-DIRECTED.

YES—SIR—IMMEDIATELY—SIR—

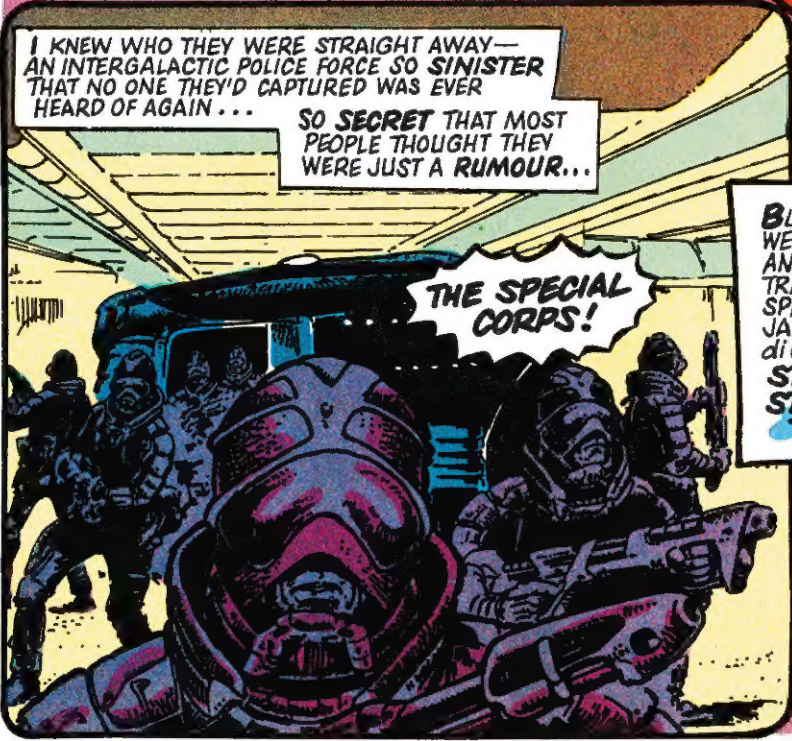


AS I WAITED FOR THE FORK-LIFTS TO FINISH, IT HIT ME WHAT WAS WRONG...

WHAT? NO OTHER TRUCKS MOVING OR LOADING... WHY...?



I HAD ABOUT 2 SECONDS TO PONDER THE QUESTION BEFORE I SAW IT... **THE BLACK VAN!**



I KNEW WHO THEY WERE STRAIGHT AWAY—AN INTERGALACTIC POLICE FORCE SO SINISTER THAT NO ONE THEY'D CAPTURED WAS EVER HEARD OF AGAIN...

SO SECRET THAT MOST PEOPLE THOUGHT THEY WERE JUST A RUMOUR...

THE SPECIAL CORPS!

BUT THESE GUYS WERE 100% REAL, AND SO WAS THE TRAP THEY WERE SPRINGING ON JAMES BOLIVAR di GRIZ—A **STAINLESS STEEL RAT TRAP!**



FOR THE FIRST TIME IN MY LIFE I FELT
THE SHARP FEAR OF THE HUNTED MAN...

THE GUYS DOING THE
HUNTING WERE EXPERTS—
BUT THEY EVIDENTLY HADN'T
SEEN A GOOD OLD-FASHIONED
HAND-GUN IN ACTION BEFORE!

A COUPLE
OF CANNON
SHOTS OVER
THEIR HEADS
WILL GIVE ME
A FEW
SECONDS...



BUT WHEN I
REACHED THE
SECOND FLOOR...



OLD HABITS DIE HARD. EVEN WITH DEATH ONLY INCHES AWAY, I COULDN'T RESIST A GOOD CIGAR!

I THOUGHT YOU'D LIKE THEM. THEY ARE YOUR BRAND, I THINK?

YEAH. BUT HOW? WHO...?

A MAN OF YOUR CONSIDERABLE CRIMINAL TALENTS WILL ALREADY HAVE DEDUCED THAT WE ARE THE **SPECIAL CORPS**. WHAT YOU WILL NOT KNOW IS **WHY** WE WANT YOU...

EASY- I'M A CROOK, YOU CATCH CROOKS... **SIMPLE!** WHAT'S NEXT- FIRING SQUAD? FLAYING ALIVE? OR HAVE YOU GOT SOME- THING REALLY NASTY?

YOU'VE BEEN READING TOO MANY CHEAP NOVELS, **diGRIZ**. I'M HERE TO OFFER YOU A JOB...

YOU ARE GOING TO JOIN THE **SPECIAL CORPS!**

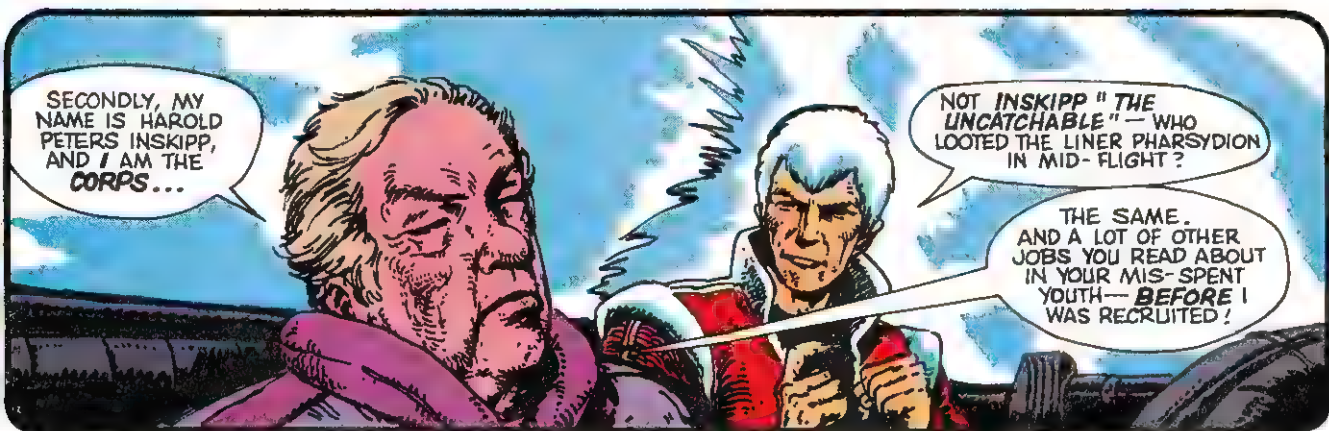
HE NEEDN'T HAVE BOTHERED WITH THE HANDCUFFS AS HE LED ME OUT. I WAS TOO PARALYSED WITH LAUGHTER TO TRY ANYTHING. **ME?** PART OF THE **GALACTIC FUZZ?** **HILARIOUS!**

SHOW A LITTLE DECORUM, **diGRIZ**. THE LOCALS ARE WATCHING.

I'D RECOVERED A LITTLE AS WE DROVE TO THE SPACEPORT...

I GOT TO ADMIT IT'S A GOOD IDEA- SET A THIEF TO CATCH A THIEF. BUT WHAT HAPPENS WHEN THE CORPS DISCOVERS YOU'RE RECRUITING VILLAINS TO DO YOUR DIRTY WORK?

NOTHING HAPPENS- EVERY ONE OF OUR TOP OPERATORS IS A CROOK! THEY'RE THE BEST MEN FOR THE JOB- SO THEY WON'T COMPLAIN!



SECONDLY, MY NAME IS HAROLD PETERS INSKIPP, AND I AM THE **CORPS...**

NOT INSKIPP "THE UNCATCHABLE"—WHO LOOTED THE LINER PHARSYDION IN MID-FLIGHT?

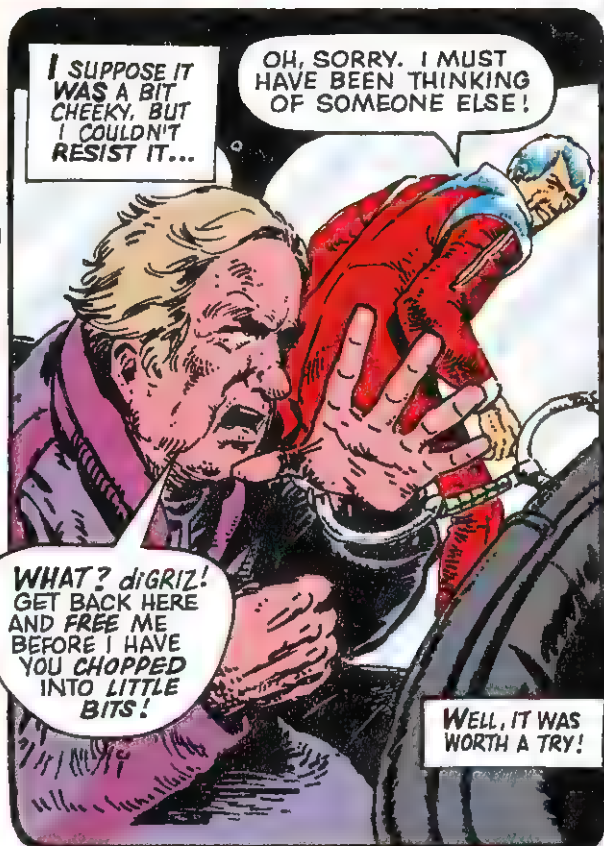
THE SAME. AND A LOT OF OTHER JOBS YOU READ ABOUT IN YOUR MIS-SPENT YOUTH—**BEFORE** I WAS RECRUITED!



INSKIPP "THE UNCATCHABLE"... MY BOYHOOD HERO...**RÄT!**

HEY, I REALLY LOVED THE STORY ABOUT HOW YOU **SWITCHED** THE CUFFS ON THAT **COPPER**—

EH? I NEVER DID THAT...

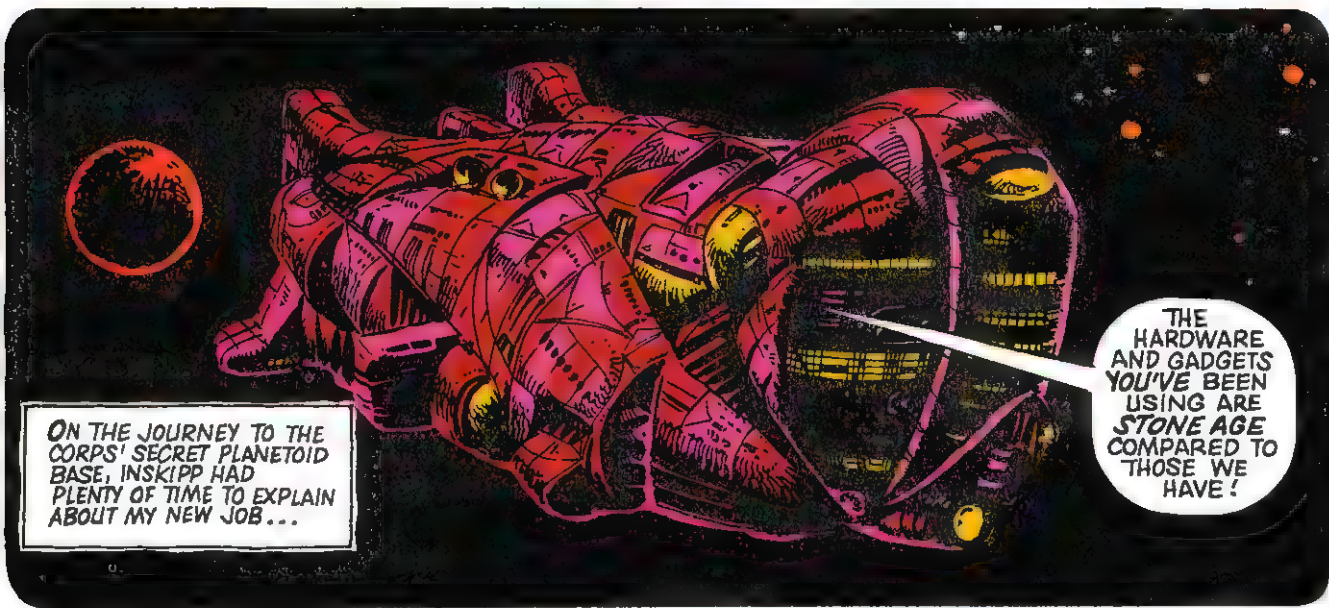


I SUPPOSE IT WAS A BIT CHEEKY, BUT I COULDN'T RESIST IT...

OH, SORRY. I MUST HAVE BEEN THINKING OF SOMEONE ELSE!

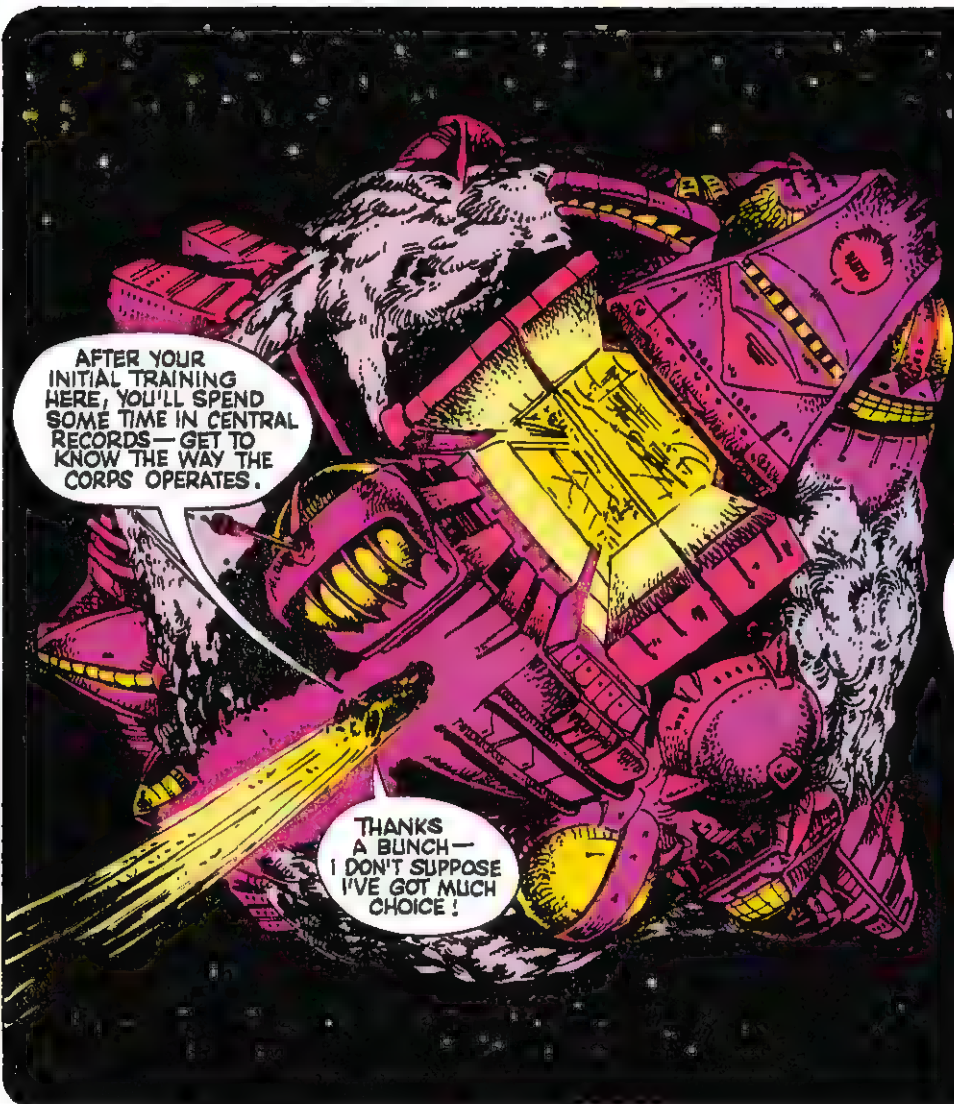
WHAT? **d'GRIZ!** GET BACK HERE AND FREE ME BEFORE I HAVE YOU **CHOPPED** INTO LITTLE BITS!

WELL, IT WAS WORTH A TRY!



ON THE JOURNEY TO THE CORPS' SECRET PLANETOID BASE, INSKIPP HAD PLENTY OF TIME TO EXPLAIN ABOUT MY NEW JOB...

THE HARDWARE AND GADGETS YOU'VE BEEN USING ARE **STONE AGE** COMPARED TO THOSE WE HAVE!



AFTER YOUR INITIAL TRAINING HERE, YOU'LL SPEND SOME TIME IN CENTRAL RECORDS—GET TO KNOW THE WAY THE CORPS OPERATES.

THANKS A BUNCH— I DON'T SUPPOSE I'VE GOT MUCH CHOICE!



YOU'VE BEEN A LONER, d'GRIZ. HERE, YOU'LL BE WORKING AS PART OF A TEAM— A GOOD TEAM. YOU'LL ENJOY IT!

HE SOUNDED SO SINCERE, I BELIEVED HIM. I ACTUALLY STARTED TO LOOK FORWARD TO FINDING SOME FRIENDS— I'D NEVER HAD ANY BEFORE.



HOW WRONG CAN YOU GET? OH, THE TRAINING WAS GOOD— WITH THE GEAR THESE GUYS HAD I COULD BE TEN TIMES THE THIEF THAT I HAD BEEN. BUT AFTERWARDS...

WAKE UP d'GRIZ!

...IT WAS DULL!



YOU'LL NEVER MAKE AN OPERATOR UNLESS YOU UNDERSTAND OUR INFORMATION PROCESSING SYSTEMS!



I THOUGHT ABOUT BREAKING OUT, BUT THAT WAS IMPOSSIBLE. I COULD, HOWEVER, BREAK IN. A PLAN STARTED TO FORM...

MAYBE THIS WILL GIVE ME BACK SOME OF MY INTEREST IN LIFE!

I HAD TO DO SOMETHING TO BEAT THE BOREDOM—

A WEEK LATER, I HAD THE INFORMATION I NEEDED. ONE OF THE CORPS' SONIC LOCK PICKS WORKED BEAUTIFULLY ON INSKIPP'S DOOR...

THIS INFO IS REALLY GONNA SURPRISE THE OLD GOAT!

BUT TO GIVE THE OLD BOY HIS DUE- HE'D KEPT SOME OF HIS OLD SKILLS.

FREEZE OR I'LL CHOP YOU IN HALF! **diGRIZ!** IF YOU WANT TO SEE ME, I **DO** HAVE A PHONE, YOU KNOW!

YEAH, BUT IT'S MORE FUN THIS WAY...

I DIDN'T GIVE HIM TIME TO LECTURE ME...

WHAT'S THIS?

IT'S AN EMPIRE BATTLESHIP - WARLORD CLASS. ENOUGH FIREPOWER TO REDUCE TODAY'S SMALL NAVY TO RADIOACTIVE DUST!

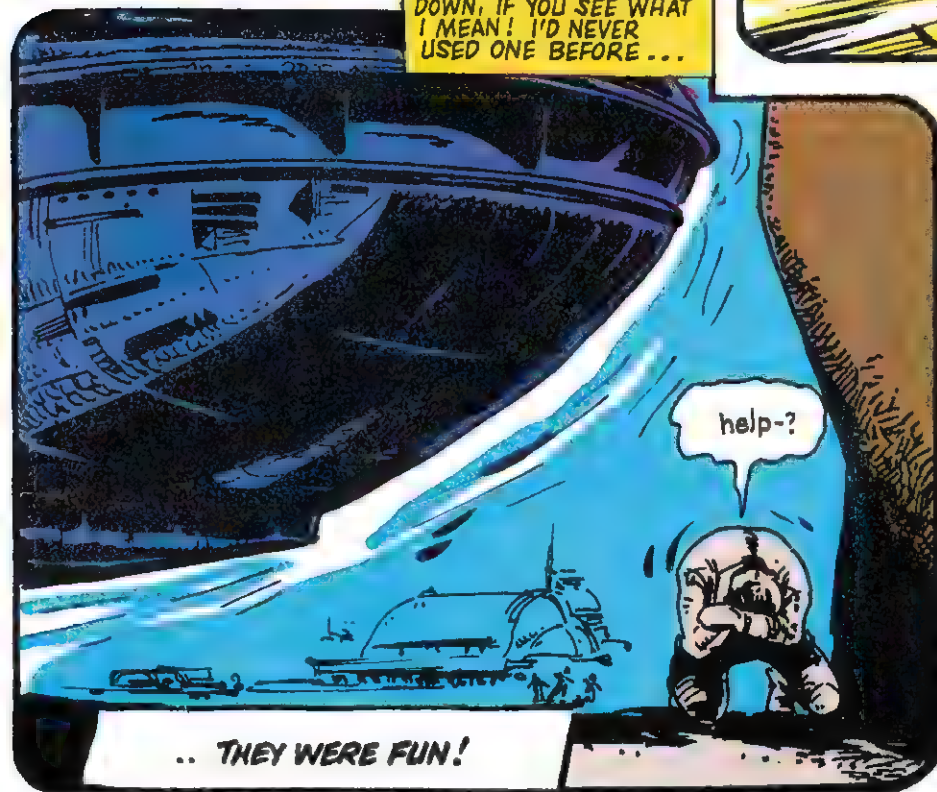
AND SHIPS OF THIS TYPE HAVE BEEN TOTALLY OUTLAWED SINCE THE SIGNING OF THE GREAT PEACE 5,000 YEARS AGO, CORRECT?

CORRECT. WITHOUT SHIPS LIKE THAT, INTERPLANETARY WAR IS IMPOSSIBLE. BUT WHAT...

WELL, WOULDN'T YOU BE INTERESTED TO KNOW THAT SOMEONE IS BUILDING ONE OF THESE LITTLE BEAUTIES RIGHT NOW! AND FOR ALL I KNOW THEY PROBABLY INTEND USING IT TO START GALACTIC WAR NUMBER SIX!



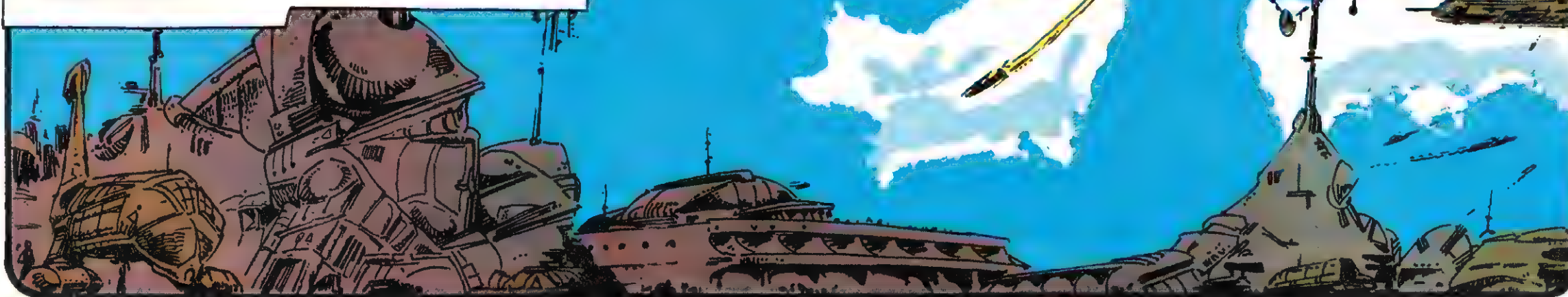
MY SHIP'S FITTED WITH THE NEW 'DEADSTOP' GENERATORS. THEY CAN STOP WITHOUT SLOWING DOWN, IF YOU SEE WHAT I MEAN! I'D NEVER USED ONE BEFORE...



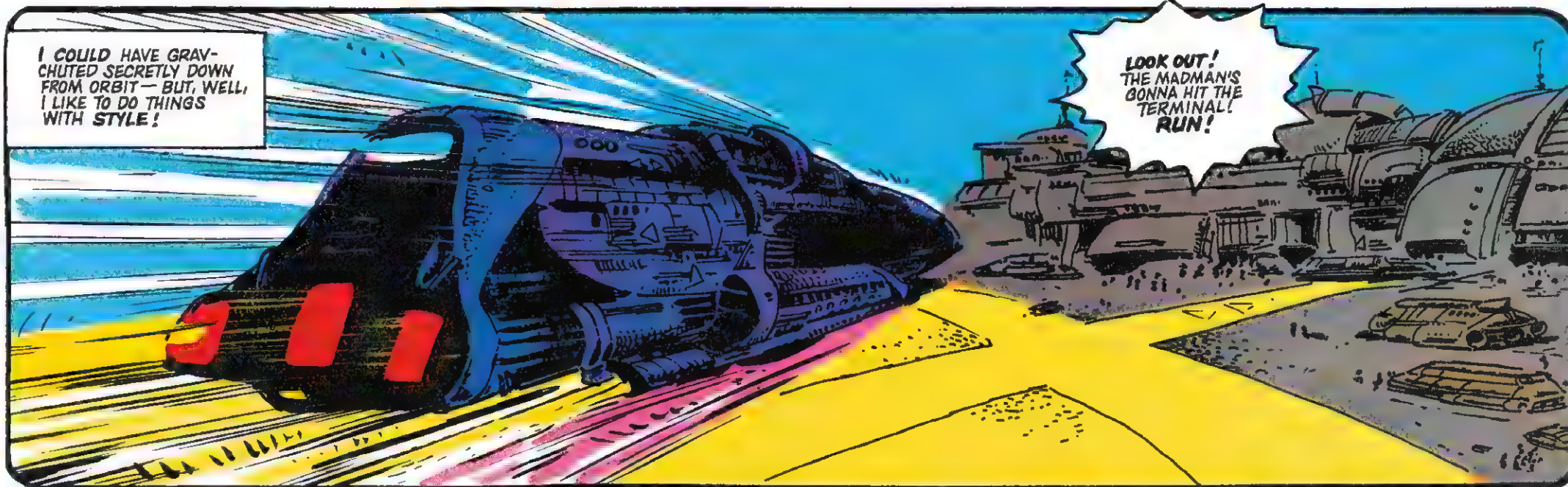
help-?

... THEY WERE FUN!

ALL OF WHICH ADDS UP TO PROBATIONARY PEACE-KEEPING AGENT JAMES BOLIVAR DIGRIZ MAKING A VERY FLASHY LANDING APPROACH ON THE PLANET CITTANUVO, WHERE THE WARSHIP WAS BEING BUILT...

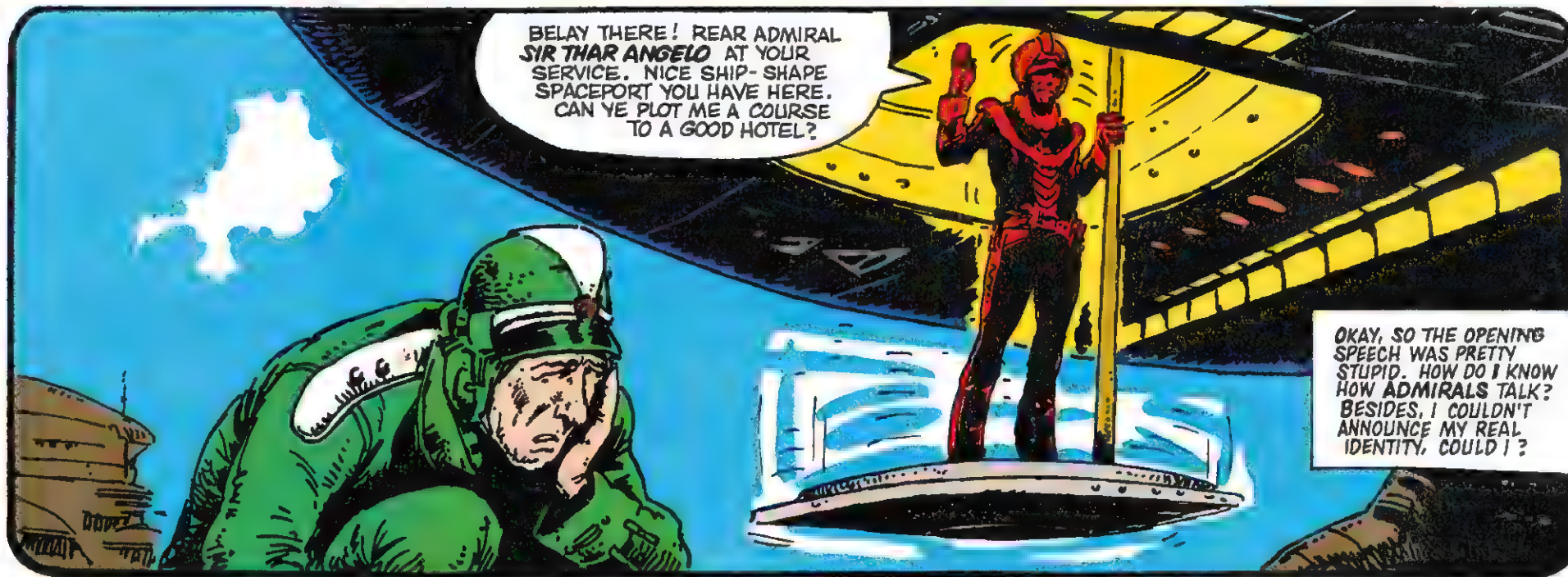


I COULD HAVE GRAY-CHUTED SECRETLY DOWN FROM ORBIT — BUT, WELL, I LIKE TO DO THINGS WITH STYLE!



LOOK OUT! THE MADMAN'S GONNA HIT THE TERMINAL! RUN!

BELAY THERE! REAR ADMIRAL SIR THAR ANGELO AT YOUR SERVICE. NICE SHIP-SHAPE SPACEPORT YOU HAVE HERE. CAN YE PLOT ME A COURSE TO A GOOD HOTEL?



OKAY, SO THE OPENING SPEECH WAS PRETTY STUPID. HOW DO I KNOW HOW ADMIRALS TALK? BESIDES, I COULDN'T ANNOUNCE MY REAL IDENTITY, COULD I?

TH- THERE'S
THE
ASTRANUVO,
SIR. ON
MAIN
AVENUE...

VERY GOOD.
COME ALONG, M-3.
BRING ME KIT AND
GET ME A VESSEL
TO MAIN
AVENUE.

AYE, AYE,
SIR---

THE ROBOT WAS EFFICIENT. WE
CHECKED INTO THE HOTEL WITHIN THE
HOUR, THEN SET OFF AGAIN ...

ASTRANUVO HOTEL

WHERE TO,
SKIPPER?

PRESIDENT'S PALACE
—AND FOR GRUD'S SAKE,
CUT OUT THE NAUTICAL
LINGO, WILL YA?

CITTANUVO WAS ONLY RECENTLY
SETTLED. THE BOYS IN CHARGE HADN'T
HAD TIME TO BUILD A BIG SECURITY
FORCE, AND THE PALACE WAS LIGHTLY
GUARDED ...

OKAY—WE'VE
SEEN THE FRONT.
NOW ROUND THE
BACK!

...WHICH MADE IT ALL THE EASIER
TO GET THROUGH THE WALL!

RIGHT, SHORT
'N' CHUNKY. WE
BOTH KNOW THAT
YOU'RE NOT REALLY
A STUPID M-3
CLASS ROBOT, BUT
A VERY CLEVER
CORPS UNDERCOVER
DROID!

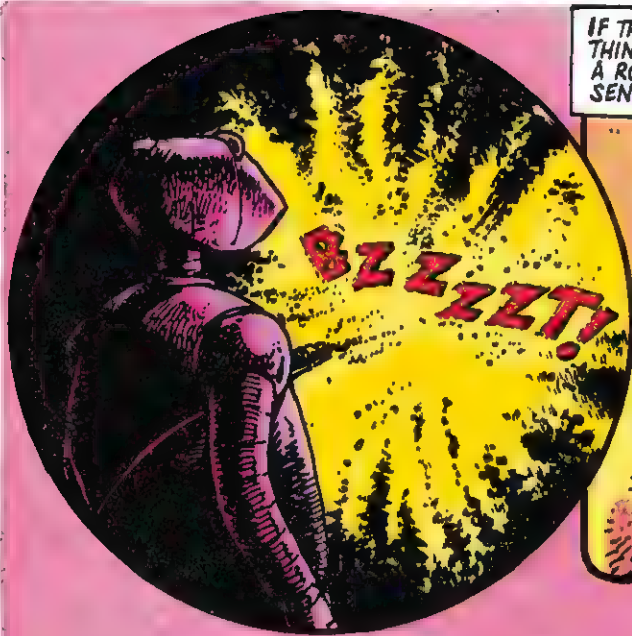
BUT EXACTLY
WHAT DO YOU
HAVE UNDER
THAT UGLY
EXTERIOR?

I AM A FULLY-
EQUIPPED MK 10
WAR DROID---
GRENADES---
MORTARS---GAS-
DISPENSER---
MOLECULAR-
DISINTEGRATOR---

ENOUGH! USE
THE DISINTEGRATOR
TO BLOW A COUPLE
OF HOLES IN THE WALL!

WHAT
SHAPE OF
HOLES?

HOLE-
SHAPED,
SO'S WE
CAN GET
THROUGH
'EM,
STOOPID!

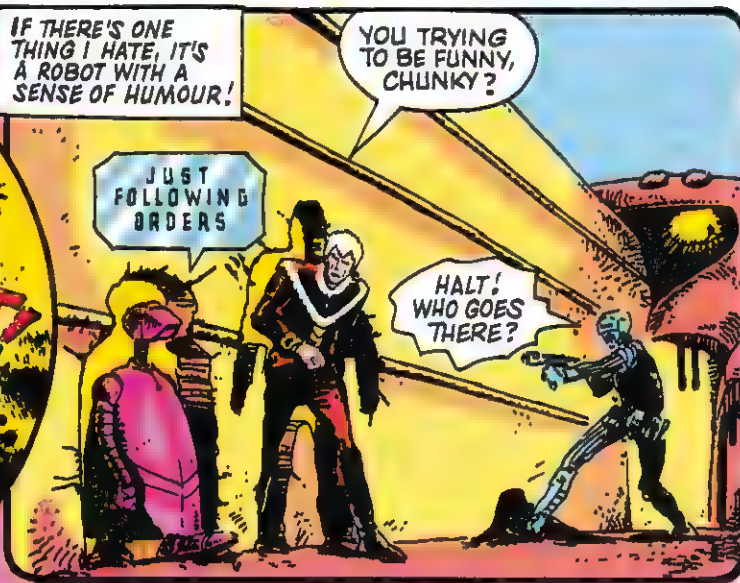


IF THERE'S ONE THING I HATE, IT'S A ROBOT WITH A SENSE OF HUMOUR!

YOU TRYING TO BE FUNNY, CHUNKY?

JUST FOLLOWING ORDERS

HALT! WHO GOES THERE?

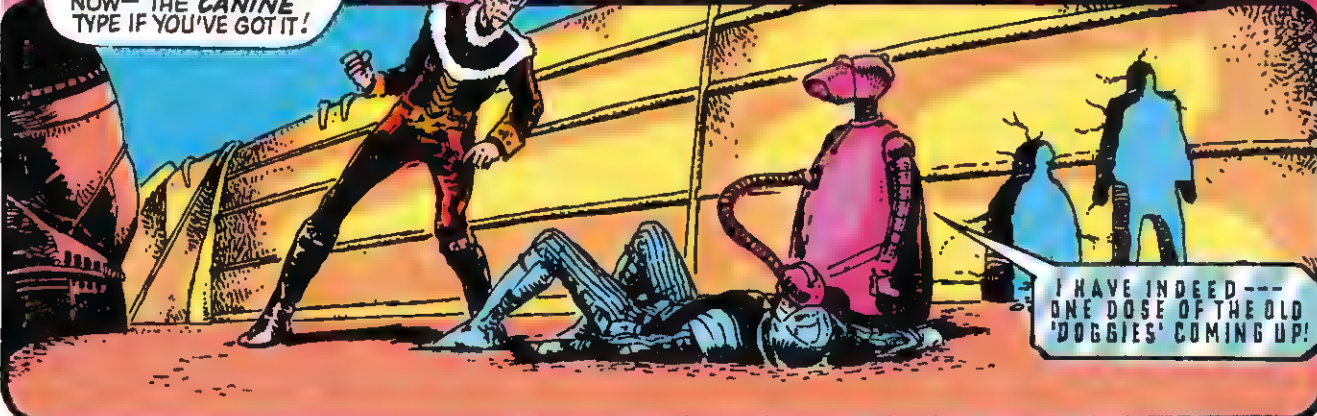


WHO DO YOU THINK I AM, YOU IDIOT? I'M THE **BURGLAR**, AIN'T I?



RENDERING GUARD UNCONSCIOUS BY PHYSICAL FORCE UNNECESSARY--- I AM EQUIPPED WITH HALLUCIN GAS FOR THE PURPOSE OF--

I KNOW WHAT IT'S FOR, CHUNKY-- BUT THIS BOZO WAS POINTING A BIG GUN AT MY LITTLE HEAD! GIVE HIM THE GAS NOW-- THE **CANINE** TYPE IF YOU'VE GOT IT!



I HAVE INDEED --- ONE DOSE OF THE OLD 'DOGGIES' COMING UP!



HALLUCIN GAS IS A PRETTY NEATO WEAPON, HUH? THE CANINE TYPE MAKES THE ENEMY THINK HE'S A DOG, SO HE'S TOO BUSY BARKING TO THINK ABOUT FIGHTING!

ARF!
ARF!



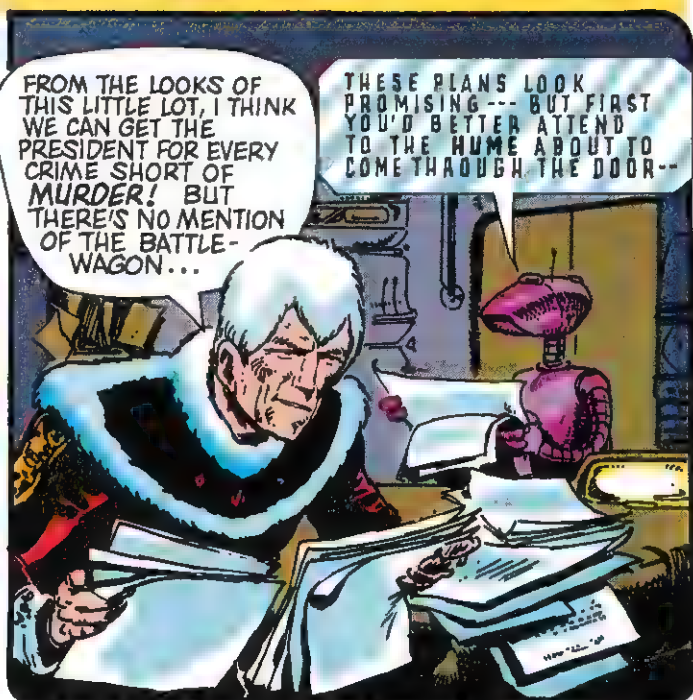
WE USED IT ON THE GUARDS OUTSIDE THE PRESIDENT'S OFFICE, TOO...

PRESIDENT'S PRIVATE SUITE

IN YOU GO, CHUNKY. START DIGGING OUT THE FILES, WHILE THESE TWO DIG FOR THEIR BONES!

GRRRRRR!

SNIFF! SNIFF!



FROM THE LOOKS OF THIS LITTLE LOT, I THINK WE CAN GET THE PRESIDENT FOR EVERY CRIME SHORT OF MURDER! BUT THERE'S NO MENTION OF THE BATTLE-WAGON...

THESE PLANS LOOK PROMISING --- BUT FIRST YOU'D BETTER ATTEND TO THE HUME ABOUT TO COME THROUGH THE DOOR--



IN THE CORRIDOR —

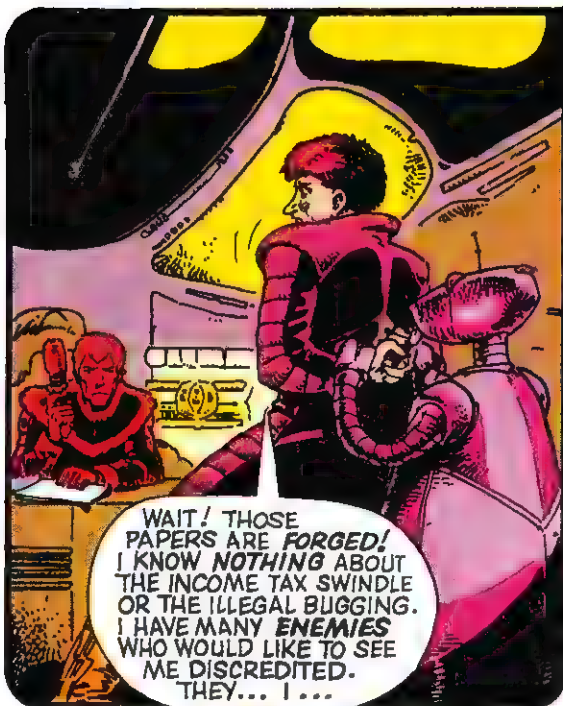
SERGEANT—LET GO MY ANKLE AT ONCE! WHAT'S GOT INTO YOU?



I HAVE, MR PRESIDENT FERRARO! I AM REAR ADMIRAL SIR THAR ANGELO—SIR TO YOU!

YOU ARE UNDER ARREST FOR EXTORTION, CONSPIRACY, THEFT AND CORRUPTION!

SEIZE HIM!



WAIT! THOSE PAPERS ARE **FORGED!** I KNOW **NOTHING** ABOUT THE INCOME TAX SWINDLE OR THE ILLEGAL BUGGING. I HAVE MANY **ENEMIES** WHO WOULD LIKE TO SEE ME DISCREDITED. THEY... I...

HE BABBLER ON FOR ABOUT FIVE MINUTES, DENYING SOME CRIMES THAT I HADN'T EVEN DISCOVERED— BUT THEN I HIT HIM WITH THE BIG ONE!

YOUR **PETTY LARCENY** DOESN'T REALLY INTEREST ME, FERRARO. WHAT I WANT TO KNOW IS— **WHY IS YOUR PLANET BUILDING THIS WARLORD CLASS BATTLESHIP?**

EH?



I-I'M **NOT** BUILDING A BATTLESHIP! THOSE ARE THE PLANS OF A FREIGHTER BEING BUILT BY A PRIVATE CITIZEN. I SIGNED THEM—

I **KNOW** THEY'RE FOR A BATTLESHIP! I ALSO KNOW THAT MY ROBOT IS EQUIPPED WITH A BUILT-IN **LIE DETECTOR** WHICH HAS MONITORED EVERY WORD YOU'VE SAID!



EXACTLY 74% OF THE SUBJECT'S STATEMENTS HAVE BEEN FALSE--- HOWEVER, THOSE CONCERNING THE BATTLESHIP ARE TRUE--- HE HAS NO KNOWLEDGE OF THE VESSEL'S TRUE NATURE ----

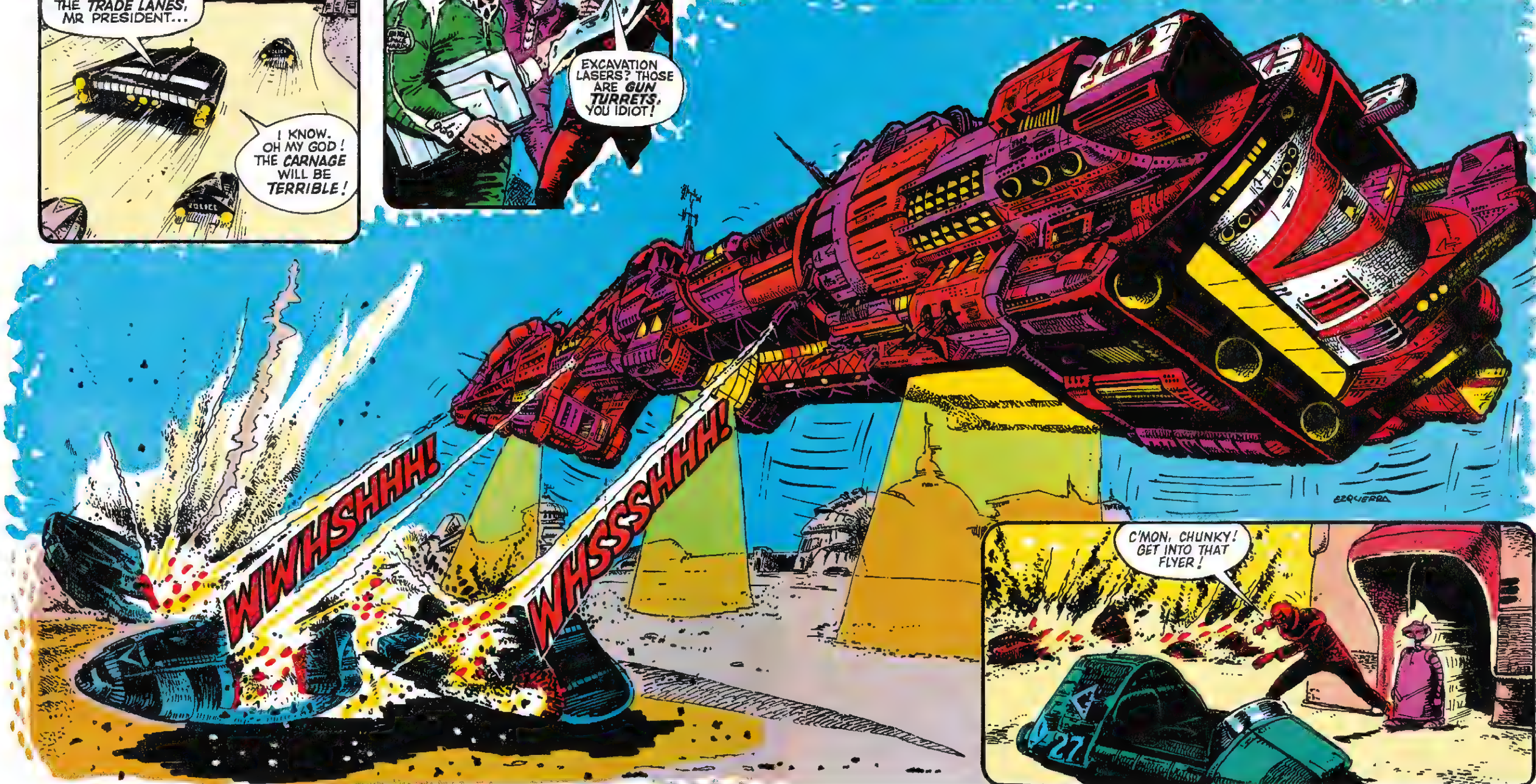
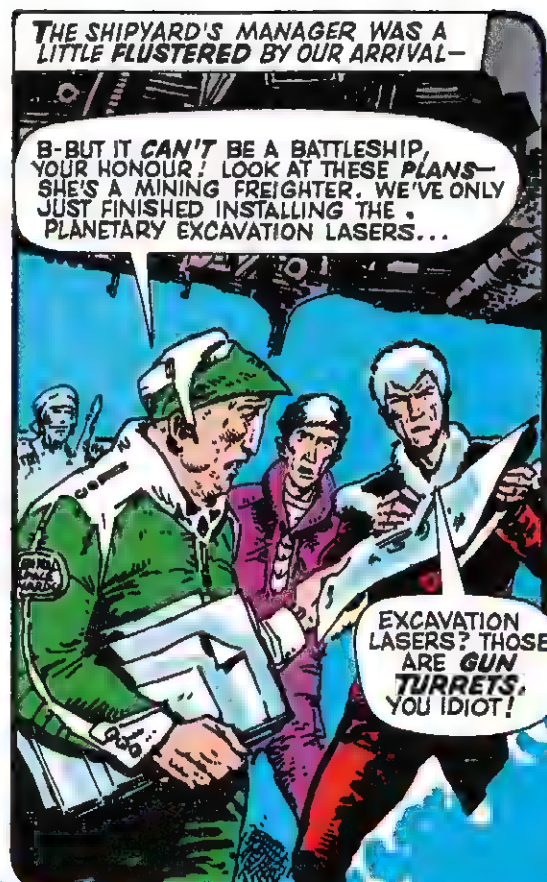
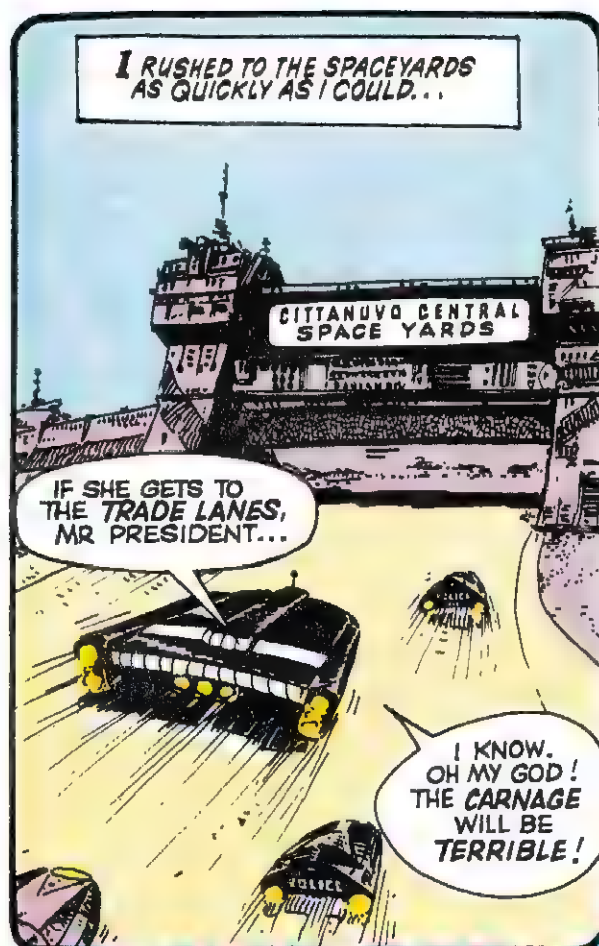
SEE? SEE—I TOLD YOU!

WHAT?

WHAT KIND OF GUY WOULD WANT HIS OWN **PERSONAL BATTLEWAGON?** THERE WAS ONLY ONE ANSWER...

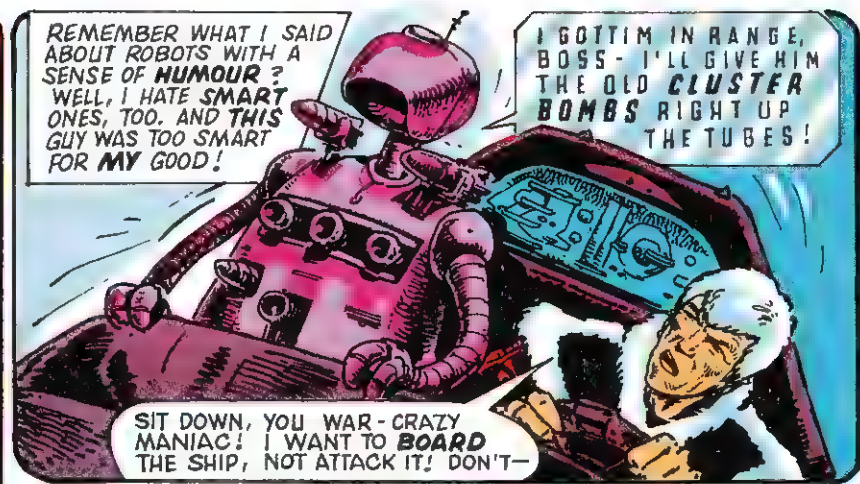
SOME **SUPERCROOK** IS PLANNING A CAMPAIGN OF BAD THINGS SO **BIG**, SO **VIOLENT** THAT IT DOESN'T BEAR THINKING ABOUT! I HAVE TO FIND HIM BEFORE HE BEGINS, BEFORE PEOPLE — A WHOLE LOT OF PEOPLE— START **DYING!**







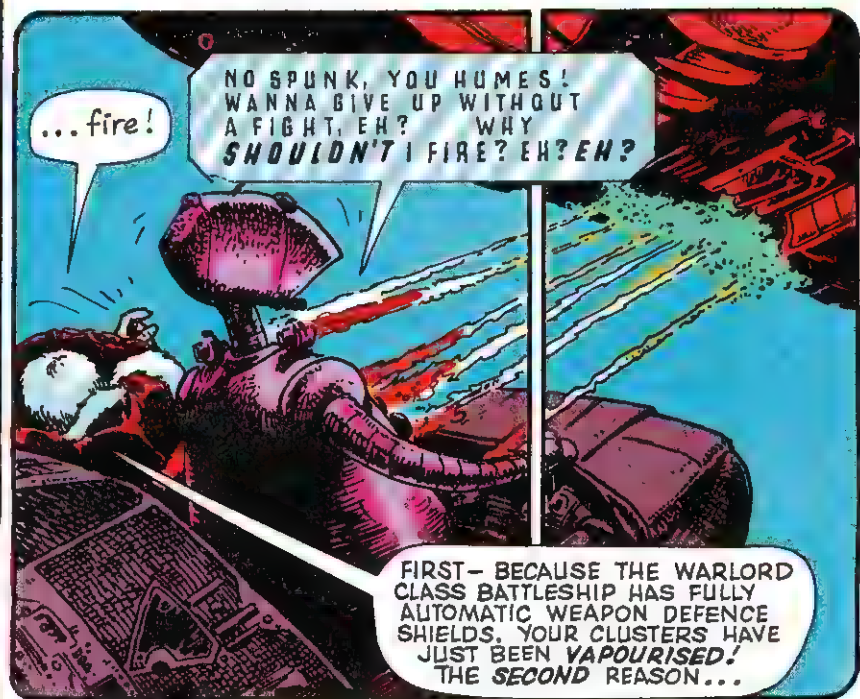
WE MIGHT
JUST BE ABLE
TO CATCH HER
BEFORE SHE HAS
A CHANCE TO
BUILD UP
SPEED...



REMEMBER WHAT I SAID
ABOUT ROBOTS WITH A
SENSE OF HUMOUR?
WELL, I HATE SMART
ONES, TOO. AND THIS
GUY WAS TOO SMART
FOR MY GOOD!

I GOT 'IM IN RANGE,
BOSS - I'LL GIVE HIM
THE OLD **CLUSTER**
BOMBS RIGHT UP
THE TUBES!

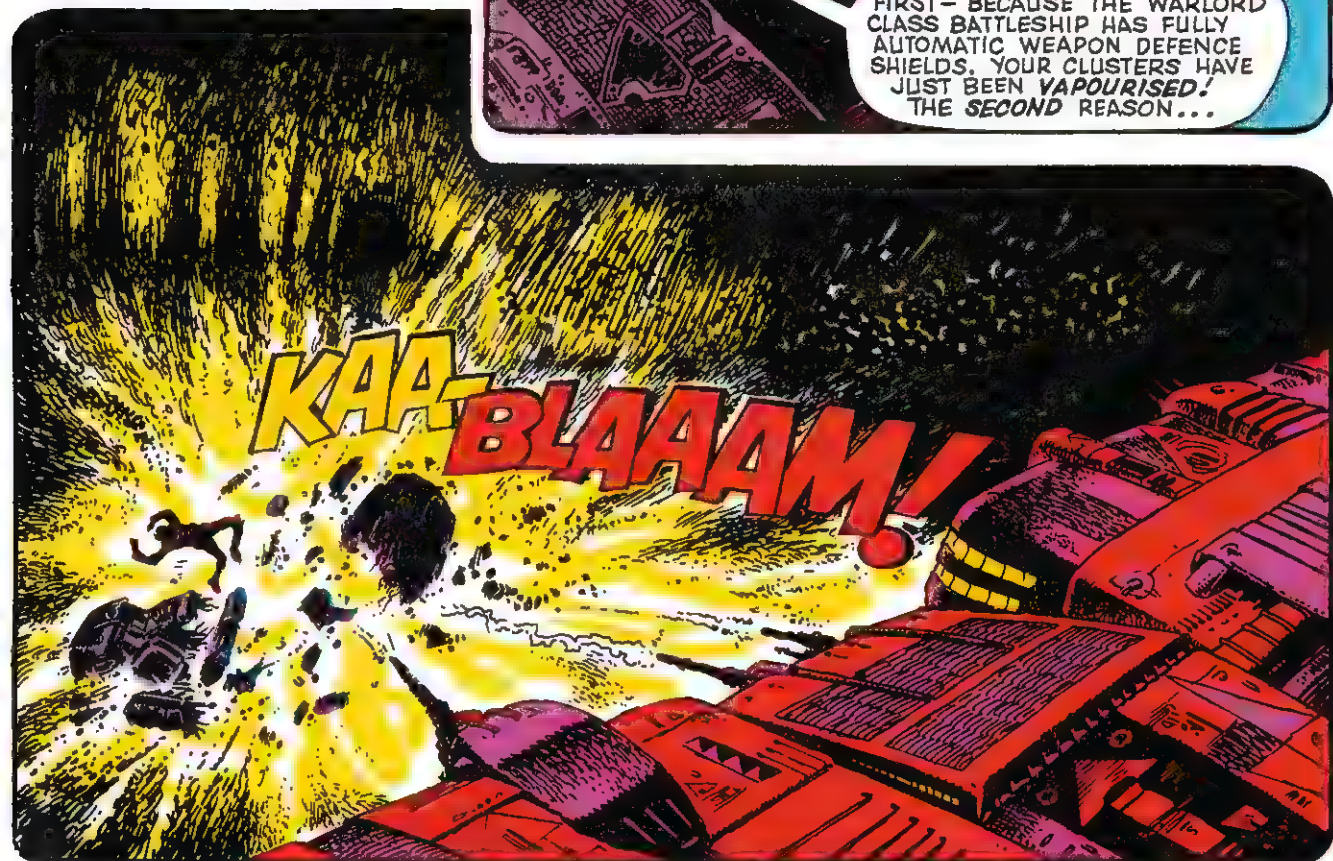
SIT DOWN, YOU WAR-CRAZY
MANIAC! I WANT TO **BOARD**
THE SHIP, NOT ATTACK IT! DON'T-



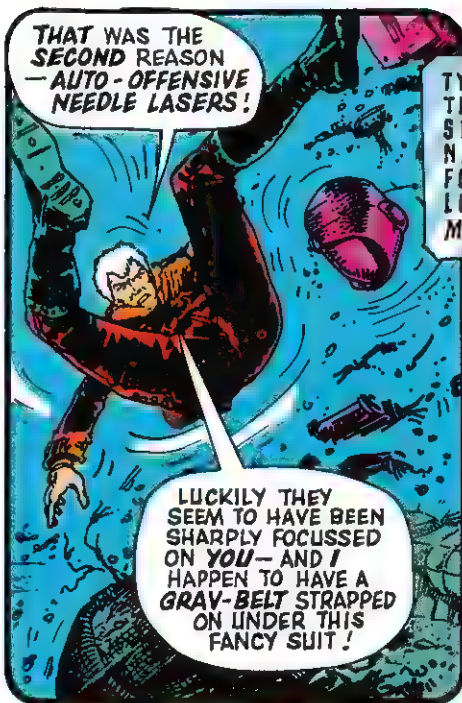
...fire!

NO SPUNK, YOU HUMES!
WANNA GIVE UP WITHOUT
A FIGHT, EH? WHY
SHOULDN'T I FIRE? EH? EH?

FIRST - BECAUSE THE WARLORD
CLASS BATTLESHIP HAS FULLY
AUTOMATIC WEAPON DEFENCE
SHIELDS. YOUR CLUSTERS HAVE
JUST BEEN **VAPOURISED!**
THE **SECOND** REASON...



KAA-BLAAAM!



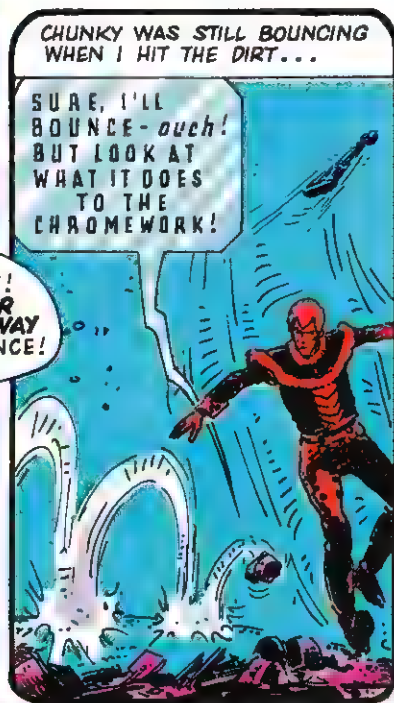
THAT WAS THE
SECOND REASON
— AUTO-OFFENSIVE
NEEDLE LASERS!

LUCKILY THEY
SEEM TO HAVE BEEN
SHARPLY FOCUSED
ON YOU— AND I
HAPPEN TO HAVE A
GRAY-BELT STRAPPED
ON UNDER THIS
FANCY SUIT!



TYPICAL HUME!
THINKS OF HIM-
SELF ALLA TIME.
NEVER A THOUGHT
FOR HIS TRUSTY
LOYAL ROBOT---
Mutter - Mutter -

STOP
GRIPING, CHUNKY!
THIS IS ALL **YOUR**
FAULT, AND **ANYWAY**
— **YOU'LL BOUNCE!**
I WON'T!



CHUNKY WAS STILL BOUNCING
WHEN I HIT THE DIRT...

SURE, I'LL
BOUNCE— *ouch!*
BUT LOOK AT
WHAT IT DOES
TO THE
CHROMEWORK!



ADMIRAL—
THANK HEAVENS
YOU'RE SAFE!
I'VE ALERTED OUR
ORBITAL POLICE—
THEY'LL BE
ABLE TO...

THEY'LL BE ABLE TO DO
NOTHING! THIS CROOK'S
GOOD, REALLY GOOD!
HE'LL HIT HYPERSPACE AS
SOON AS HE'S OUT OF THE
ATMOSPHERE. **NO WAY**
YOU CAN **TRACK HIM!**



I WANT TO SEE **EVERYTHING**
SHOWN ON YOUR RECORDS ABOUT
THE TEAM RESPONSIBLE FOR
BUILDING AND
STEALING
THIS SHIP.

Y-YES, SIR.
I'LL SET UP A
WORKING PARTY.
WE SHOULD HAVE
A REPORT IN A
COUPLE OF DAYS...



TWO DAYS? IT WILL
TAKE **LESS THAN 12**
HOURS— OR YOU WILL
TAKE A WALK THROUGH
AN AIRLOCK WITHOUT
A SUIT! GEDDIT?

IT'S AMAZING WHAT A LITTLE OLD-
FASHIONED THREAT CAN ACHIEVE...



LESS THAN TWELVE HOURS LATER, IN
THE PRESIDENT'S PRIVATE SUITE —

THIS IS IT,
ADMIRAL. ALL
WE COULD
COLLECT ON
THEM...

PLUG IT IN AND
LET'S SEE WHAT
WE'RE UP
AGAINST.

THE CASSETTE WASN'T REALLY ANY USE TO ME— ANY MASTER CRIMINAL CAN CHANGE HIS APPEARANCE AND PRINTS AT WILL. I WAS JUST INTERESTED TO SEE WHAT MY FOE AND HIS GIRLFRIEND LOOKED LIKE...



AND, AS I SKIMMED THROUGH THE CASSETTE, DISCOVERING AN INTRICATE TRAIL OF BRIBERY AND CORRUPTION...

A- ADMIRAL...
TH- THERE'S A NAVY CRUISER LANDING IN MY GARDEN!

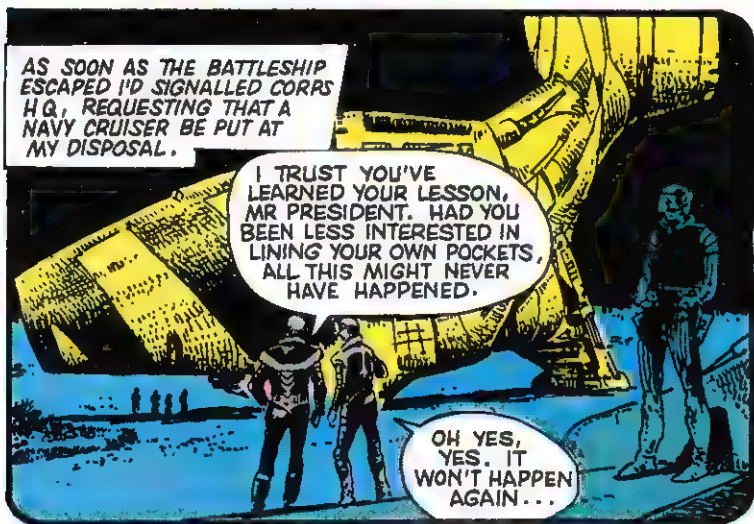
SSHHH!
DON'T TELL THE NEIGHBOURS OR THEY'LL WANT ONE, TOO!



AS SOON AS THE BATTLESHIP ESCAPED I'D SIGNALLIED CORPS H.Q., REQUESTING THAT A NAVY CRUISER BE PUT AT MY DISPOSAL.

I TRUST YOU'VE LEARNED YOUR LESSON, MR PRESIDENT. HAD YOU BEEN LESS INTERESTED IN LINING YOUR OWN POCKETS, ALL THIS MIGHT NEVER HAVE HAPPENED.

OH YES, YES. IT WON'T HAPPEN AGAIN...



YOU MAY NOW SLEEP SAFELY IN YOUR BED, SECURE IN THE KNOWLEDGE THAT THE LEAGUE'S GRAND FLEET IS HOT IN PURSUIT AND THAT THE CRIMINALS WILL SOON BE BROUGHT TO JUSTICE.



WELL, OKAY, SO MOST OF MY PARTING SPEECH WAS LIES! THERE WAS NO SUCH THING AS A GRAND FLEET— BUT WE ON THE CRUISER WERE IN HOT PURSUIT!

THESE REPORTS SHOW THAT HE TOOK OFF WITH VERY LOW FUEL STOCKS. HE'LL HAVE TO DROP OUT OF HYPERSPACE TO STOCK UP— BUT NOW WILL WE KNOW WHERE, OR WHEN..?

OH, WE'LL KNOW...

IT'LL BE TOO LATE— BUT WE'LL KNOW ABOUT IT ALL RIGHT!

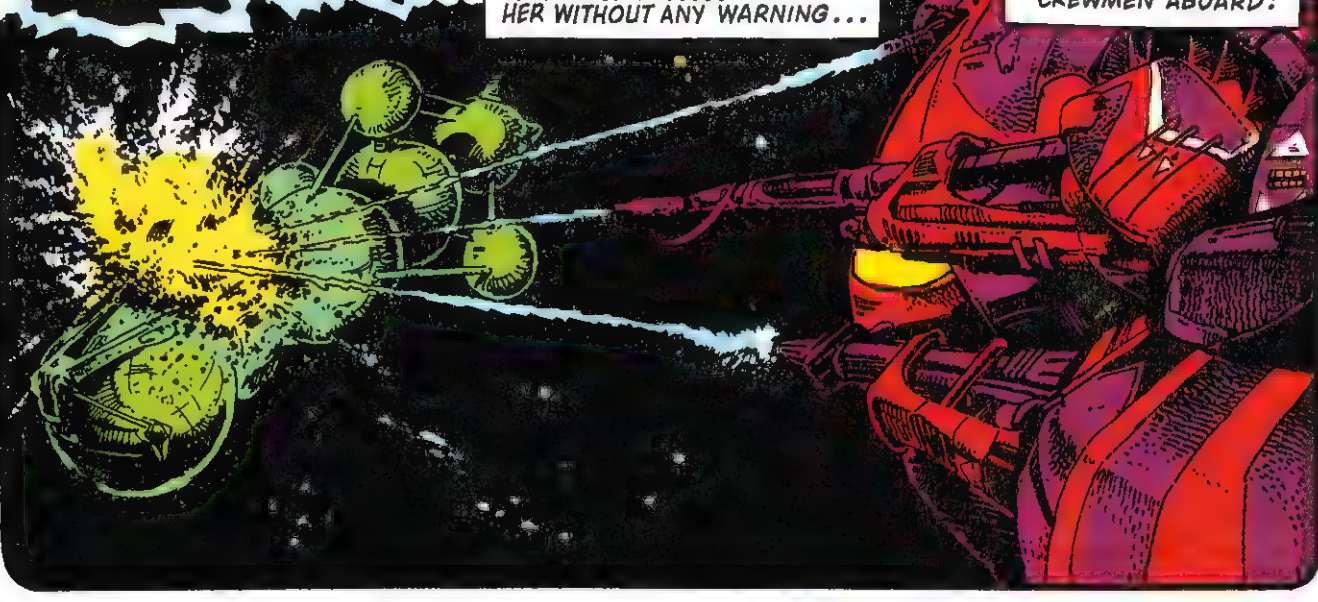





IT WAS LESS THAN TWO SHIP-DAYS
LATER WHEN WE HEARD ABOUT IT.
THE TANKER OGGET'S DREAM HAD
BEEN APPROACHING BASE...

PEPE JUST BREEZED UP TO
HER WITHOUT ANY WARNING...

AND BLEW A
WHACKING GREAT
HOLE IN HER COMMAND
DECK, KILLING ALL 18
CREWMEN ABOARD!



BY THE TIME WE GOT THERE, HE'D
LOOTED THE TANKER OF HER CARGO.
YEAH, YOU GUESSED— PLUTONIUM!
NOW HE HAD ENOUGH FUEL TO LAST
HIM FIVE YEARS!

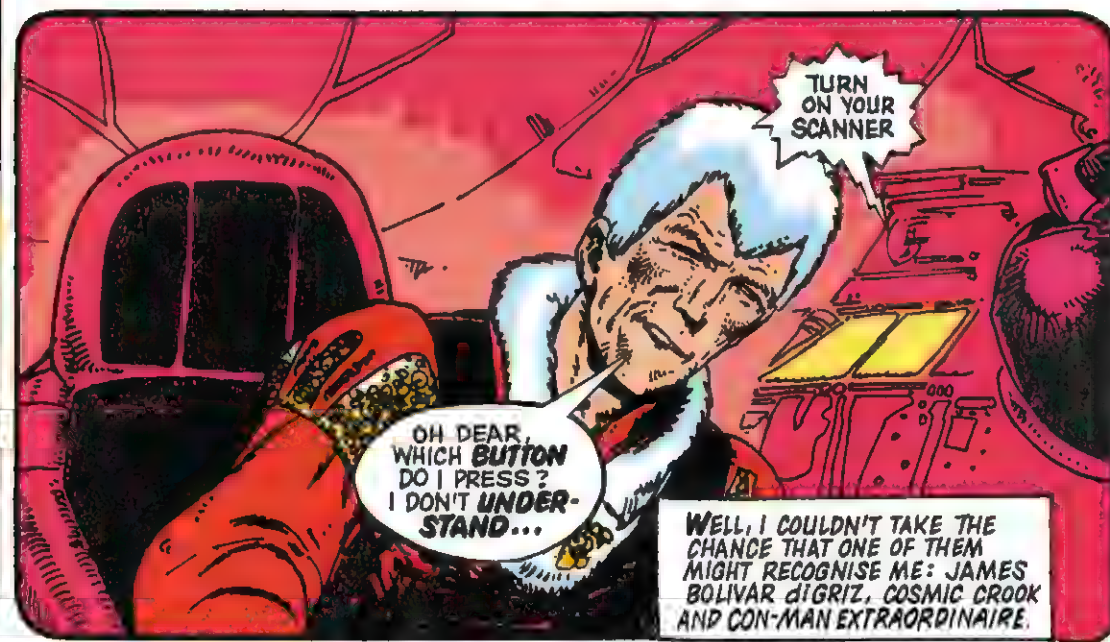
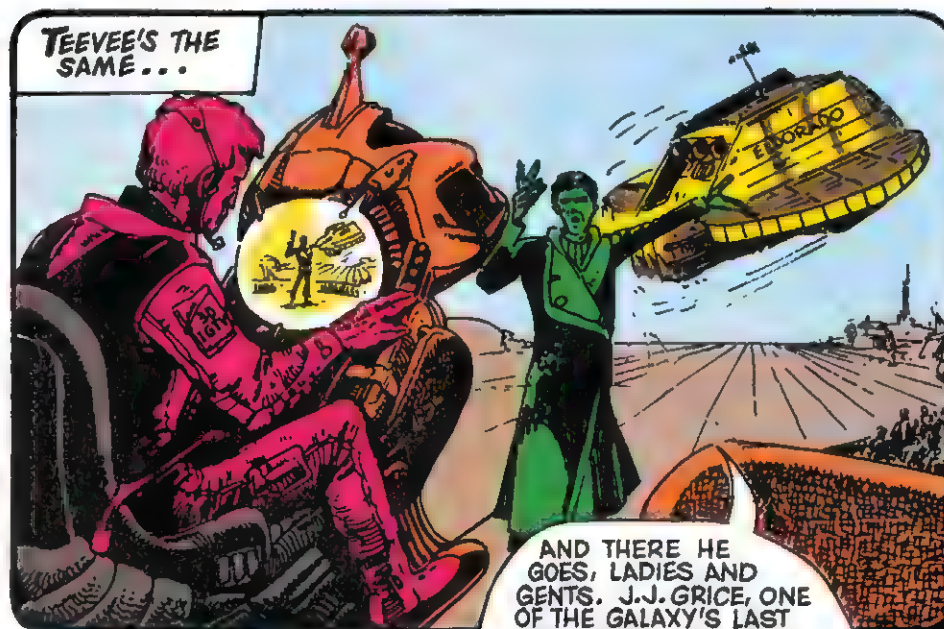
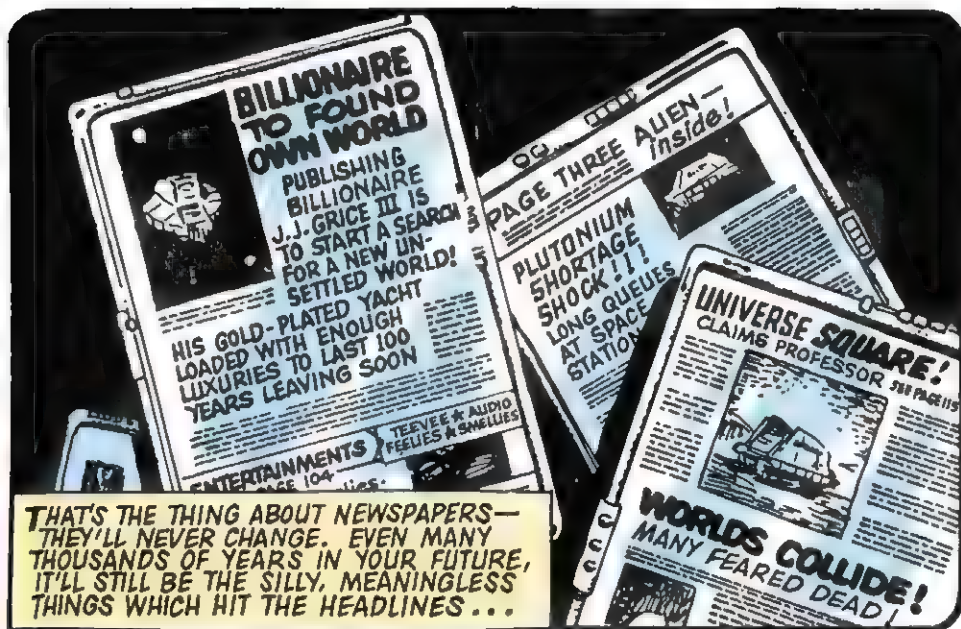


AND I COULD SEE
THAT WE WERE
GETTING NOWHERE.
WE COULD GO ON
CHASING HIM LIKE
THIS FOR EVER!



I HAD TO GET PEPE CHASING ME,
RATHER THAN THE OTHER WAY ROUND.

I THOUGHT I COULD SEE A WAY....

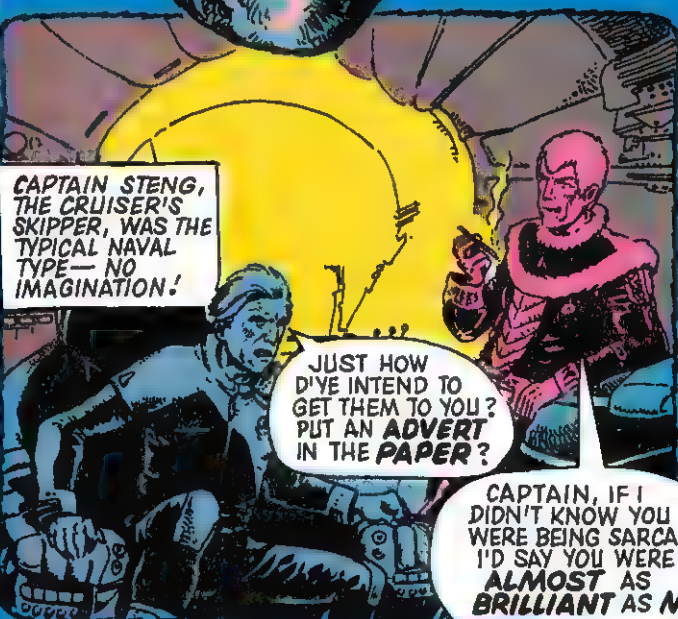


I WAS REALLY ENJOYING THE BILLIONAIRE BIT. FOR A MOMENT MY MIND DRIFTED BACK TO THE INCIDENT LAST WEEK, WHEN THE ILLEGAL BATTLESHIP BLASTED THE HELL OUT OF A FUEL FREIGHTER!

THE NAVY CRUISER ON WHICH I WAS BASED WAS FIRST ON THE SCENE —



WE CAN'T GO ON TRYING TO GUESS THEIR NEXT TARGET. WE'VE GOT TO MAKE THEM COME TO US...



CAPTAIN STENG, THE CRUISER'S SKIPPER, WAS THE TYPICAL NAVAL TYPE— NO IMAGINATION!

JUST HOW D'YE INTEND TO GET THEM TO YOU? PUT AN ADVERT IN THE PAPER?

CAPTAIN, IF I DIDN'T KNOW YOU WERE BEING SARCASTIC, I'D SAY YOU WERE **ALMOST AS BRILLIANT AS ME!**

STENG READ MY LITTLE 'PRESS RELEASE', ABOUT THE BILLIONAIRE...

BILLIONAIRE? GOLD-PLATED YACHT? LUXURIES...? WHAT IN THE BLACK VOID IS THIS ALL ABOUT?..!

SIMPLE. OUR CHIEF VILLAIN, PEPE, HAS BEEN LIVING ON VERY POOR RATIONS FOR SOME WEEKS NOW. I'LL GAMBLE THAT HE'LL BE INTERESTED IN OBTAINING A FEW OF THE LUXURIES OF LIFE...

A COUPLE OF DAYS LATER...



SKIPPER! THEY'VE HIT A NAVY SUPPLY STATION. 34 MEN DEAD!

di GRIZ— IF THIS CRAZY PLAN OF YOURS DOESN'T WORK, I'LL PERSONALLY SEE THAT YOU'RE **PLAYED ALIVE!**



IF THE PLAN DOESN'T WORK, CAPTAIN— THERE WON'T BE ENOUGH OF MY **SKIN LEFT** TO PICK UP WITH A **PAIR OF TWEEZERS!**

WELL, THAT'S HOW THE PLAN STARTED— AND IT LOOKED LIKE IT HAD WORKED. PEPE PULLED THE **ELDORADO** ALONGSIDE. THEN I LAID THE **BIG SURPRISE** ON HIM—

OKAY, PEPE—
THE GAME'S UP!
OBEY ORDERS
AND I MIGHT
LET YOU
LIVE...

I WAITED FOR THE FULL IMPACT TO SINK IN— THEN I HIT THE MASTER SWITCH WHICH WOULD FEED PEPE WITH A PRE-RECORDED VIDEO AND AUDIO TAPE.

NOW SHUT UP
AND LISTEN...

THIS CRAFT
IS NOW ELECTRO-
MAGNETICALLY
WELDED TO YOUR
BATTLESHIP...

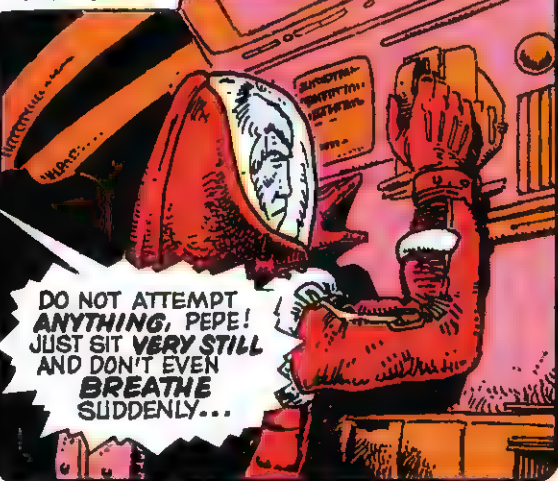
I'D MADE THE TAPE SOUND AS
NATURAL AS POSSIBLE, SO THAT
PEPE WOULD THINK I WAS STILL
SPEAKING 'LIVE' FROM THE
COMMAND CONSOLE...

TRY TO **SEPARATE**
US OR **BOARD** MY
CRAFT, AND WE WILL
ALL CATCH A **SERIOUS**
CASE OF DEATH IN
A VERY LARGE
EXPLOSION...

THE WELDING DROID HAD CUT
A NEAT HOLE IN ONE OF THE
BATTLESHIP'S HOLDS—

THERE WAS NO ARMOUR OR WARNING
DEVICE AT THIS POINT— I'D CHOSEN
IT CAREFULLY FROM THE BLUEPRINTS...

AS I EQUALISED PRESSURE IN THE EMERGENCY LOCK, I HEARD MY RECORDED PATTERN COME TO AN END—

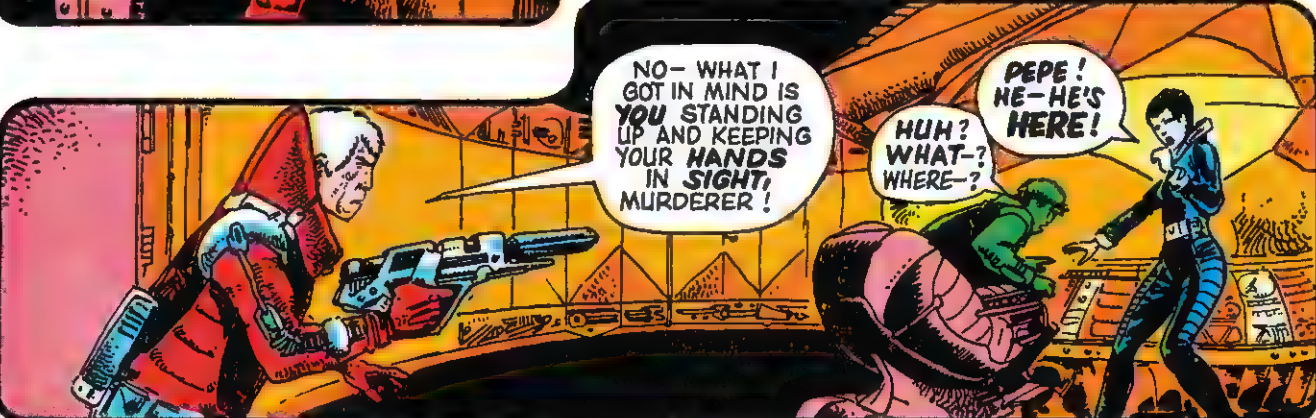


DO NOT ATTEMPT ANYTHING, PEPE! JUST SIT VERY STILL AND DON'T EVEN BREATHE SUDDENLY...

PEPE WAS GETTING CURIOUS— AND A TAPE CAN'T ANSWER QUESTIONS...



OKAY, WHOEVER YOU ARE. JUST WHAT YOU GOT IN MIND— A DEAL? HUH? HUN?



NO— WHAT I GOT IN MIND IS YOU STANDING UP AND KEEPING YOUR HANDS IN SIGHT, MURDERER!

HUH? WHAT? WHERE—?

PEPE! HE—HE'S HERE!

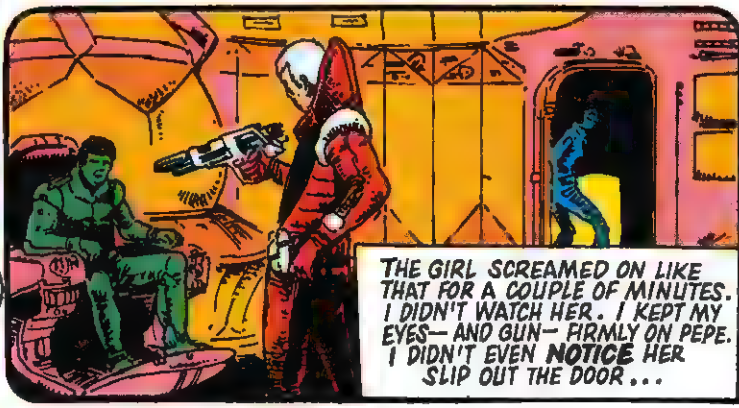


WHAT— WHAT WILL HAPPEN NOW?

THE NAVY ARE ALREADY ON THEIR WAY. YOU'LL BE TAKEN INTO CUSTODY. I DOUBT WHETHER YOU'LL GET A TRIAL. YOU BOTH LOOK AS GUILTY AS HELL TO ME.



NO! NO— PLEASE! I DIDN'T WANT TO DO IT. HE MADE ME DO ALL THOSE BAD THINGS!



THE GIRL SCREAMED ON LIKE THAT FOR A COUPLE OF MINUTES. I DIDN'T WATCH HER. I KEPT MY EYES— AND GUN— FIRMLY ON PEPE. I DIDN'T EVEN NOTICE HER SLIP OUT THE DOOR...

BUT PEPE DID—AND AS SOON AS SHE'D GONE...

OH, WELL DONE, MR POLICEMAN!
HAHAHA! PRETTY LITTLE ANGELINA'S
TAKEN YOU IN AS WELL!

WHAT
ARE YOU
TALKING
ABOUT,
KILLER?

SHE'S AWAY NOW, SO I
MIGHT AS WELL TELL YOU—
**SHE'S THE BLOODTHIRSTY
MASTERMIND BEHIND THIS
SCHEME! SHE'S THE
KILLER WHO WANTED TO
BE THE EMPRESS
OF THE GALAXY!**

I HOPED THAT PEPE
WAS SPINNING ME A
LINE TO SAVE HIS OWN
SKIN. BUT THERE WAS
SOMETHING ABOUT
THE GIRL—HER EYES,
I THINK—THAT HAD ME
WORRIED. ANYWAY,
WHEN THE NAVY
ARRIVED—

WELL
DONE, SIR.
WE'LL
TAKE HIM
NOW...

GIMME YOUR
RADIO, **QUICK—!**

CAPTAIN
STENG—HAVE
ANY OF OUR
VESSELS PICKED
UP A LIFE-
BOAT?

WHY, YES.
THE **HOOD** ASKED
FOR PERMISSION TO
ANSWER A **DISTRESS
SIGNAL** ABOUT 15
MINUTES AGO. WE
THOUGHT IT MIGHT
BE YOU ...

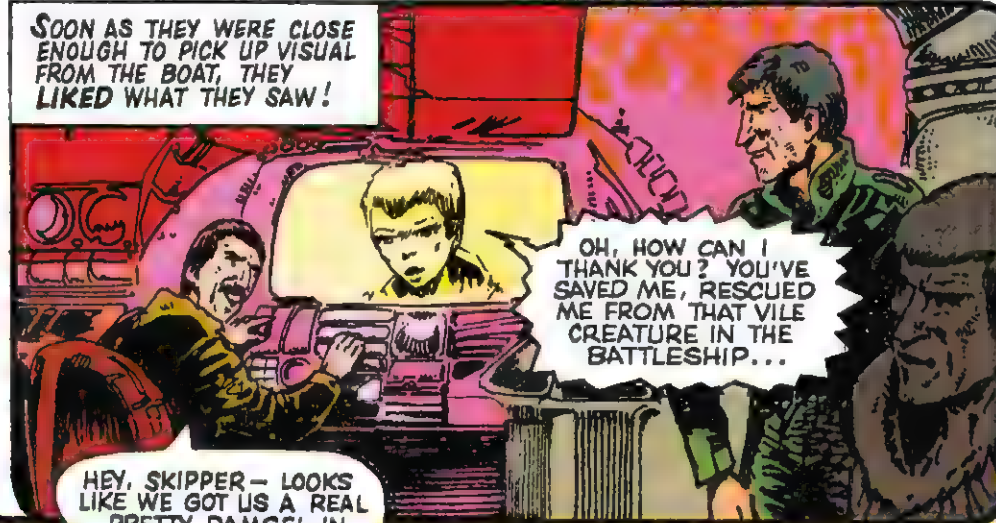
FUNNY, THOUGH—
WE HAVEN'T BEEN
ABLE TO RAISE THE
HOOD SINCE THEN...

MINUTES EARLIER,
ON BOARD "THE
HOOD"...



VERY WELL,
HELMSMAN.
BRING US
ALONGSIDE...

SOON AS THEY WERE CLOSE
ENOUGH TO PICK UP VISUAL
FROM THE BOAT, THEY
LIKED WHAT THEY SAW!



OH, HOW CAN I
THANK YOU? YOU'VE
SAVED ME, RESCUED
ME FROM THAT VILE
CREATURE IN THE
BATTLESHIP...

HEY, SKIPPER— LOOKS
LIKE WE GOT US A REAL
PRETTY DAMSEL IN
DISTRESS!

BRING THE YOUNG LADY'S
CRAFT INTO THE MAIN AIR-
LOCK, HELMSMAN. I SHALL
GO AFT TO MEET HER...

OFFICERS! HUH—
SAVE ALL THE BEST
JOBS FOR THEM-
SELVES!



THE GIRL WAS A **PSYCHOPATHIC
KILLER**— WITHIN THREE MINUTES,
SHE WAS THE ONLY LIVING THING
ON THE SHIP!

IT'S ALL RIGHT,
MISS— YOU'RE
SAFE NOW. THE
AIRLOCK IS
OPENING. ALL
YOUR TROUBLES
ARE OVER...

YOU BET
THEY ARE,
SWEET-
HEART!

UNFORTUNATELY,
THE END OF MY
TROUBLES—

— IS THE
BEGINNING OF
YOURS!



EH?

GLUURGH!

AAAAH!

AAAAH!



UUUUH!

ARGH!

AND THEN, LIKE THE EXPERT PILOT THAT SHE WAS, SHE NAVIGATED FOR A QUICK SERIES OF **HYPER-SPACE JUMPS** THAT **NOBODY** COULD POSSIBLY FOLLOW...

WE DIDN'T FIND OUT ABOUT THE MASSACRE FOR WEEKS— AND I TOOK IT PERSONALLY. I MEAN, I'D CAPTURED THE ILLEGAL BATTLESHIP AND BOYFRIEND PEPE... BUT ANGELINA HAD ESCAPED!

SO YOURS TRULY— **JAMES BOLIVAR d'GRIZ**, COSMIC CROOK TURNED AGENT FOR THE **SPECIAL CORPS**, HAD **BLOWN IT**—AND **12 MEN** HAD **DIED!** I WAS NOT HAPPY!

I'D BEEN PESTERING CORPS CHIEF INSKIPP SINCE I'D LEARNED THE TRUTH—

NOW LISTEN, d'GRIZ. NO-ONE'S ACCUSING YOU OF **FAILURE**. YOU **DID** A GREAT JOB FOR A FIRST ASSIGNMENT. YOU BROUGHT BACK THE **SHIP**—AND **PEPE** OVER THERE...

PEPE—IT WOULD HAVE BEEN KINDER TO **EXECUTE** THE POOR DOLT. INSTEAD, THE CORPS' 'PSYCORRECTION' DIVISION HAD **DONE THINGS** TO HIM...

THEY FIGURED THEIR BRAIN-CUTTERS COULD **ERASE** THE CRIMINAL PARTS OF HIS MIND AND MAKE HIM INTO A NICE GUY...

IT HADN'T WORKED TOO WELL. PEPE NOW HAD AN I.Q. JUST BELOW THAT OF A **RABBIT**...

... AND A PRETTY **THICK** RABBIT, AT THAT!



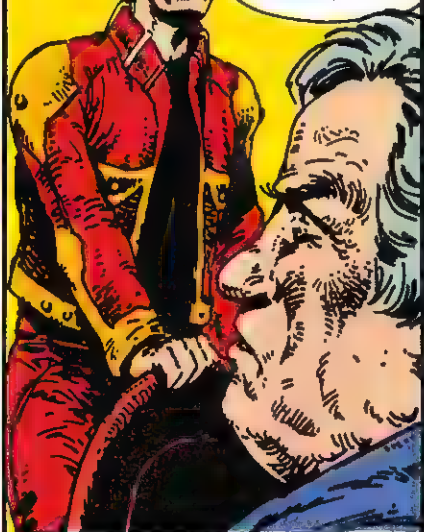
I WAS SURE INSKIPP WAS KEEPING HIM AROUND JUST TO ANNOY ME, TO REMIND ME THAT THE MURDEROUS ANGELINA WAS STILL FREE.

COULDN'T I BORROW JUST A LITTLE SHIP, BOSS? I'M SURE I COULD FIND HER.



FOR THE 110TH TIME—**NO!** MILLIONS OF PEACE OFFICERS ARE ENGAGED ON A GALAXY-WIDE SEARCH. THERE'S NOTHING YOU COULD DO TO HELP.

SO I'M NOT GOOD ENOUGH FOR THE JOB— THAT'S WHAT YOU'RE SAYING! I SHALL RETURN TO MY ROOM AND DROWN MY SORROWS...

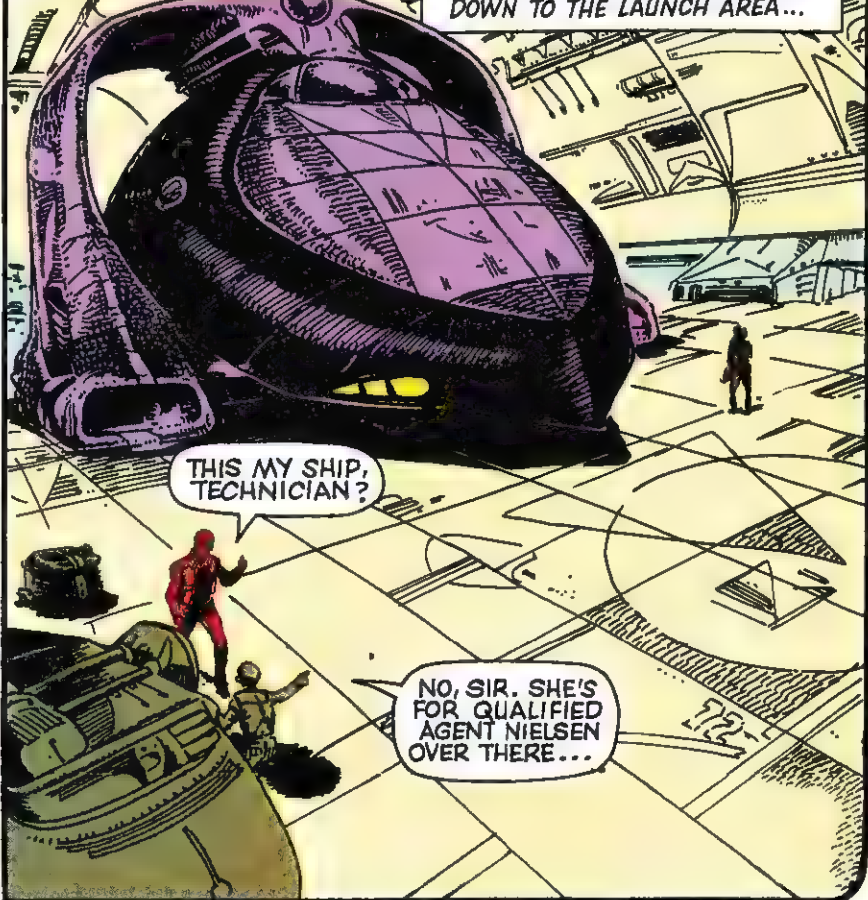


THINK I'M GIVING UP, HUH?

WELL, THAT'S WHAT I WANTED INSKIPP TO THINK. ONLY I WASN'T HEADED ANYWHERE NEAR MY ROOM...



ONE THING I'D LEARNED FROM ANGELINA IS THAT IF YOU'VE GOT A PLAN, THEN PUT IT INTO ACTION IMMEDIATELY. I WENT STRAIGHT DOWN TO THE LAUNCH AREA...



THIS MY SHIP, TECHNICIAN?

NO, SIR. SHE'S FOR QUALIFIED AGENT NIELSEN OVER THERE...

OVE NIELSEN HAD LECTURED
DURING MY TRAINING. I KNEW
HE WAS A KEEN SPORTSMAN—

HOW'S THE
TENNIS COMING
ON, OVE?

NOT SO BAD,
JIM. FANCY A
GAME WHEN I
GET BACK FROM THIS
MISSION?

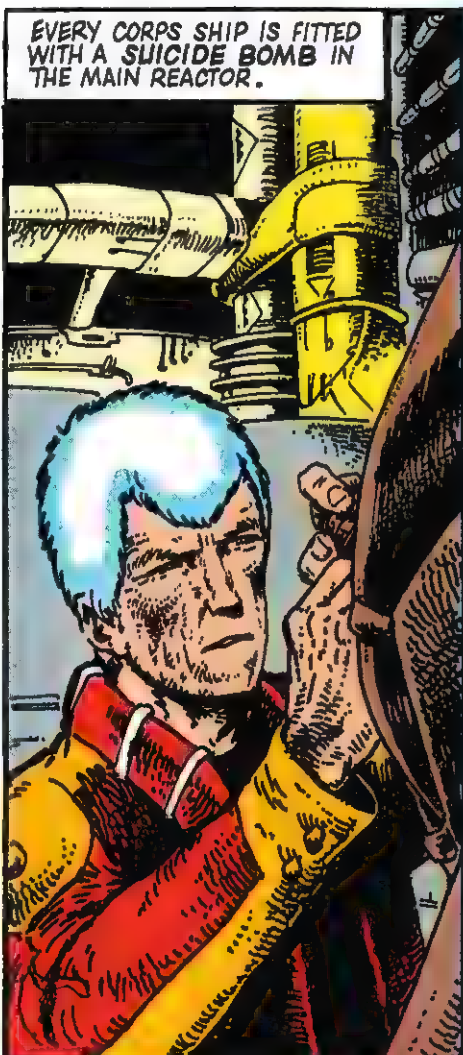
YEAH! I GOT
THIS GREAT NEW
CHOP SHOT!

I KNOW IT WASN'T A
VERY NICE THING TO DO.
BUT I DID NEED HIS SHIP...

I GUNNED HER OUT
OF THE ASTEROID
BASE AT FULL SPEED
EMERGENCY POWER!

AS SOON AS THE
ACCELERATION WAS
OVER, I DIVED FOR THE
ENGINE ROOM...

EVERY CORPS SHIP IS FITTED WITH A SUICIDE BOMB IN THE MAIN REACTOR.



THEY'RE VERY SIMPLE DEVICES— JUST A CHUNK OF EXPLOSIVE WITH A FUSE ATTACHED. THEY CAN BE SET OFF BY REMOTE CONTROL FROM CORPS H.Q. IN CASE OF CAPTURE.

I DIDN'T THINK INSKIPP WOULD USE THIS ONE ON ME— BUT I SEPARATED FUSE AND CHARGE, JUST TO BE ON THE SAFE SIDE!



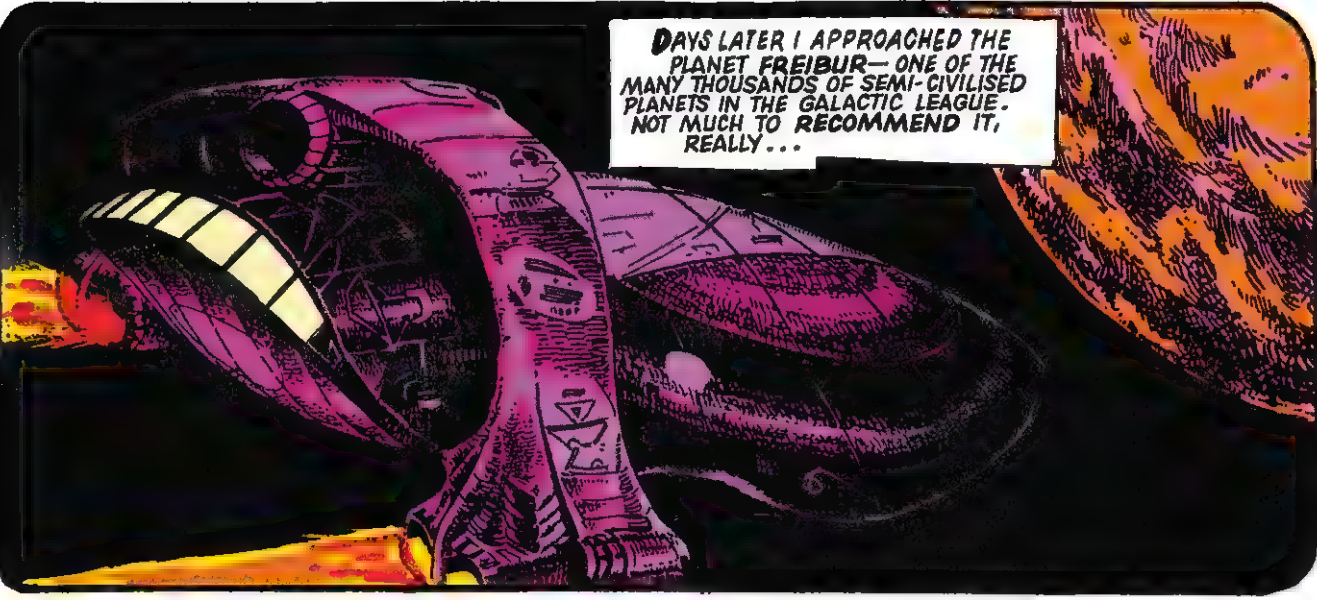
AND I WASN'T A SECOND TOO SOON!



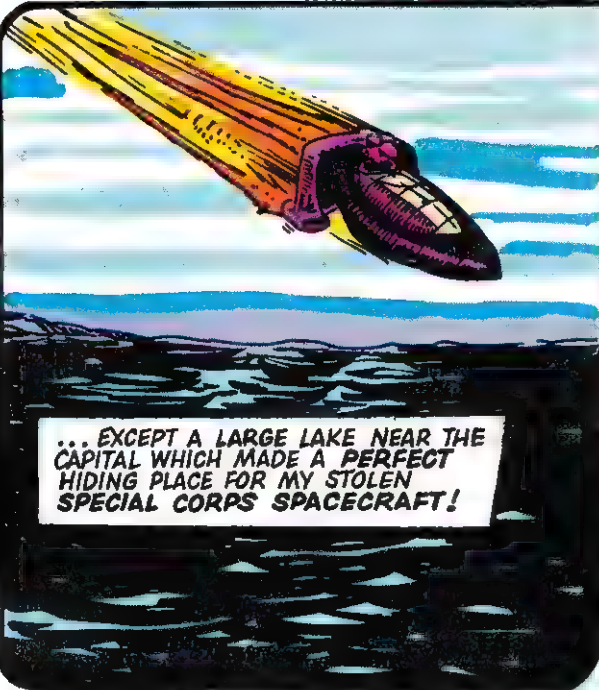
OUCH! OKAY, INSKIPP—I GET YOUR MESSAGE. I'VE JUST BEEN FIRED!

IT SUITED ME LIKE THIS, ANYWAY— I WAS BACK ON MY OWN, A FREE AGENT— A **CRIMINAL** AGAIN! IT WAS ONE STAINLESS STEEL RAT AGAINST ANOTHER ONE NOW—





DAYS LATER I APPROACHED THE
PLANET FREIBUR— ONE OF THE
MANY THOUSANDS OF SEMI-CIVILISED
PLANETS IN THE GALACTIC LEAGUE.
NOT MUCH TO RECOMMEND IT,
REALLY...



A "SEARCH AND LOCATE"
PROGRAMME ON THE SHIP'S
COMPUTER HAD NAMED FREIBUR
AS THE PLACE MOST LIKELY TO
FIND HER...

... EXCEPT A LARGE LAKE NEAR THE
CAPITAL WHICH MADE A PERFECT
HIDING PLACE FOR MY STOLEN
SPECIAL CORPS SPACECRAFT!



THE NIGHTMARES HAD
HARDLY STARTED
WHEN —

WHO'S
THERE?

SPEAK FAST,
BUDDY— THIS
.75 CALIBRE
RECOILLESS
DOESN'T
HAVE MUCH
PATIENCE!



AS I LAID DOWN
BENEATH MY ENVIRO-SHEET TO
WAIT FOR DAWN, I PREPARED
MYSELF FOR SOME BAD DREAMS...



HOWDY, NEIGHBOUR!
GOING TO FREIBURBAD?
YOU GOT TO— AIN'T NOWHERE
ELSE TO GO! GOT BOAT HERE,
OLD BOAT BUT GOOD BOAT.
YOU RIDE? BEATS
WALKING...

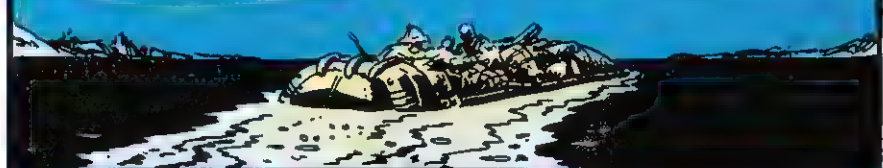
IF THIS BEING WASN'T A
FREIBUR COP— A BEING I
SUSPECTED DIDN'T EXIST
ANYWAY— MY LUCK WAS
WELL IN. KEEPING THE .75
HANDY, I BOARDED HIS
'VESSEL'...



ME
JIM—
WHO
YOU?

I GUG, HUNTER. GO
FREIBURBAD TO SELL SKINS.
YOU HAVE DRINK OF GUG'S
SPECIAL BREW...

WELL, I COULDN'T REFUSE,
COULD I? MIGHT BE RUDE,
YOU KNOW...



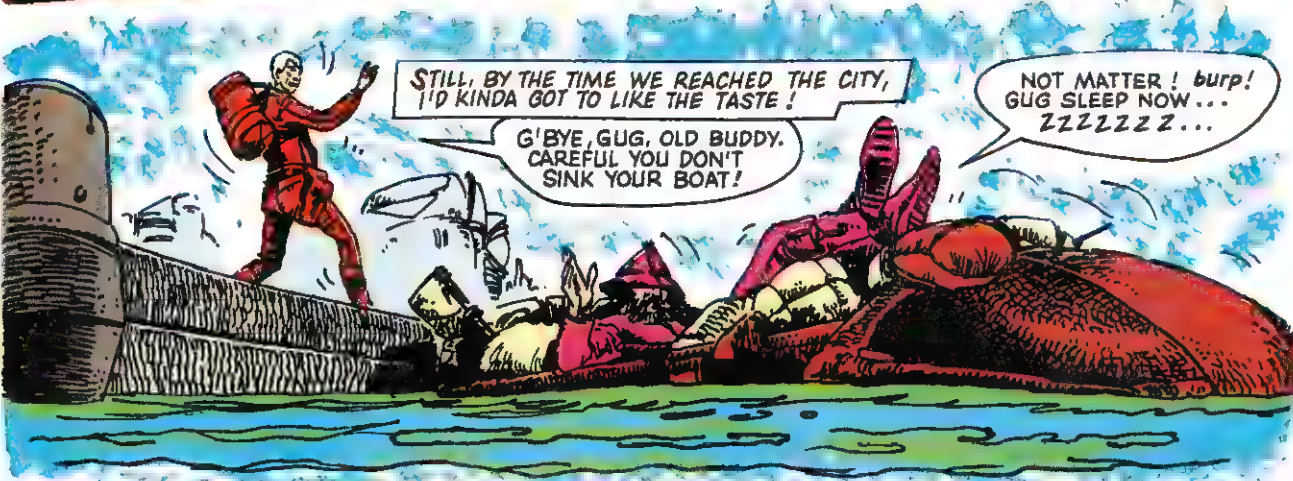
GO ON—
YOU TRY
IT!



GOOD, EH?



AND THEN I KNEW GUG COULDN'T BE A COP.
COPS TEND TO THINK LOGICALLY— AND IF YOU
SWIGGED THIS STUFF REGULARLY, YOU'D END
UP NOT THINKING AT ALL! IT WAS PURE,
100% BRAIN ROT!

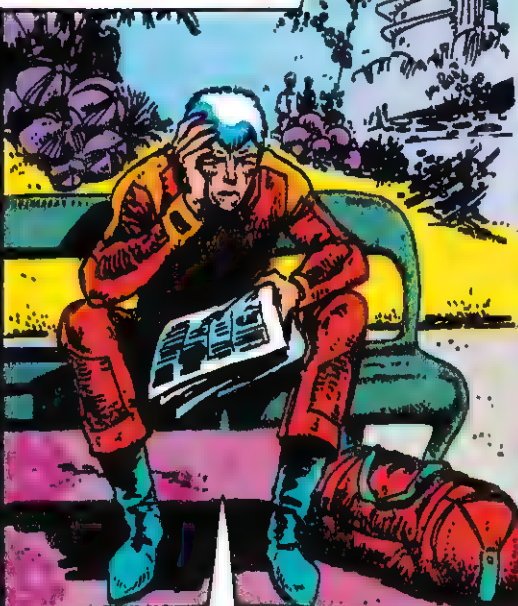


STILL, BY THE TIME WE REACHED THE CITY,
I'D KINDA GOT TO LIKE THE TASTE!

G'BYE, GUG, OLD BUDDY.
CAREFUL YOU DON'T
SINK YOUR BOAT!

NOT MATTER! burp!
GUG SLEEP NOW...
ZZZZZZZ...

BUT SOON, AS I PLOUGHED THROUGH THE LOCAL PAPER IN FREIBURBAD'S CENTRAL PARK, I VOWED I'D NEVER TOUCH A DROP AGAIN...



MAN, MY HEAD! GOTTA FORGET THE PAIN AND LOOK FOR A PLACE TO STAY. BUT HOW CAN I AFFORD THE HOTEL BILLS? I GOT NO **MONEY**, I **DON'T**...

IT SUDDENLY OCCURRED TO ME—I WAS THINKING LIKE AN HONEST MAN!

WHAT ARE YOU SAYING, DIGRIZ? YOU'RE A CRIMINAL—



THE BEST IN THE GALAXY!



YOU CAN'T BREAK ANY RULES—SINCE YOU MAKE THEM UP FOR YOURSELF!



I **KNEW** WHERE I HAD TO GO—I DIDN'T HAVE ANY **CHOICE**...

WHEN YOU DECIDE TO ROB A BANK, PICK THE BIGGEST YOU CAN FIND...



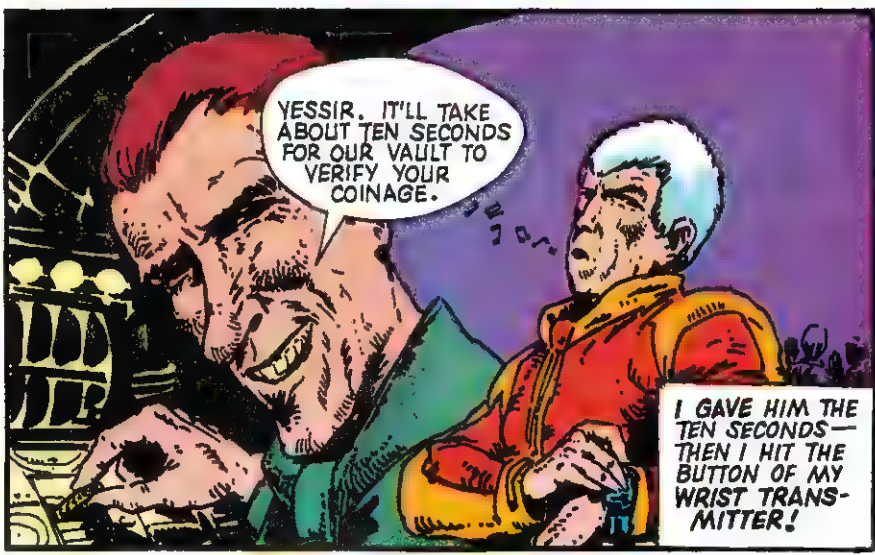
HMMM—HUMAN GUARDS. SO THEY DON'T HAVE ELECTRONIC PROTECTION... 'SGONNA BE EASY!

THE BANK BEGGED TO BE CRACKED—A SIMPLE MIXTURE OF HUMAN TELLERS AND AUTO-CASH DISPENSERS...



GIMME CHANGE FOR A LEAGUE 10-STAR GOLDEN...

YESSIR. IT'LL TAKE ABOUT TEN SECONDS FOR OUR VAULT TO VERIFY YOUR COINAGE.



I GAVE HIM THE TEN SECONDS—THEN I HIT THE BUTTON OF MY WRIST TRANSMITTER!

IT WAS BEAUTIFUL—THE SORT OF MOMENT THAT LEAVES A WARM GLOW IN THE MEMORY. THAT TEN-STAR COIN HAD TAKEN HOURS TO BUILD!

KERRUMP!

BUT THE MINIATURE RECEIVER AND EXPLOSIVE I'D BUILT INTO IT WORKED PERFECTLY AS THEY SPILT THE VAULT WIDE OPEN!

THE SAME RADIO IMPULSE THAT HAD TRIGGERED THE COIN ALSO IGNITED THE SMOKE AND GAS GRENADES I'D DROPPED AROUND THE PLACE—AFTER I'D INSERTED MY NOSE PLUGS, OF COURSE!

THE EXPLOSION HAD ALSO DONE SOMETHING TO THE AUTO-DISPENSERS, SO IT WAS RAINING MONEY AS I LOOTED THE VAULT OF AS MUCH GOLD AS I COULD CARRY...

THEN I SIMPLY LEFT, INNOCENTLY, WITH THE REST OF MY VICTIMS!

KOF!

SPLUTTER!

WHAT'S HAPPENING?

AS I PULLED MY GOGGLES ON, I FELT GREAT. THE STAINLESS STEEL RAT WAS CAUSING CHAOS. THIS WAS AS IT SHOULD BE!

AND THAT, GENTLE READER, IS HOW TO GET YOURSELF A STAKE ON AN UNFRIENDLY PLANET!

NOW I COULD GET DOWN TO THE REAL BUSINESS AT HAND—FIND THE LADY!

I CHECKED IN AT A HOTEL IN THE CITY'S BUSY, BUSTLING ENTERTAINMENTS QUARTER. I FIGURED THAT MY DEAR ANGELINA WOULD BE INTERESTED IN DISAPPEARING FOR A WHILE UNTIL THE HUE AND CRY HAD DIED DOWN...

AND WHERE BETTER TO LOSE YOURSELF THAN A PLACE LIKE THIS? SO MANY PEOPLE ABOUT THAT TRYING TO FIND SOMEONE WOULD BE LIKE LOOKING FOR A NEEDLE IN A PIN FACTORY...

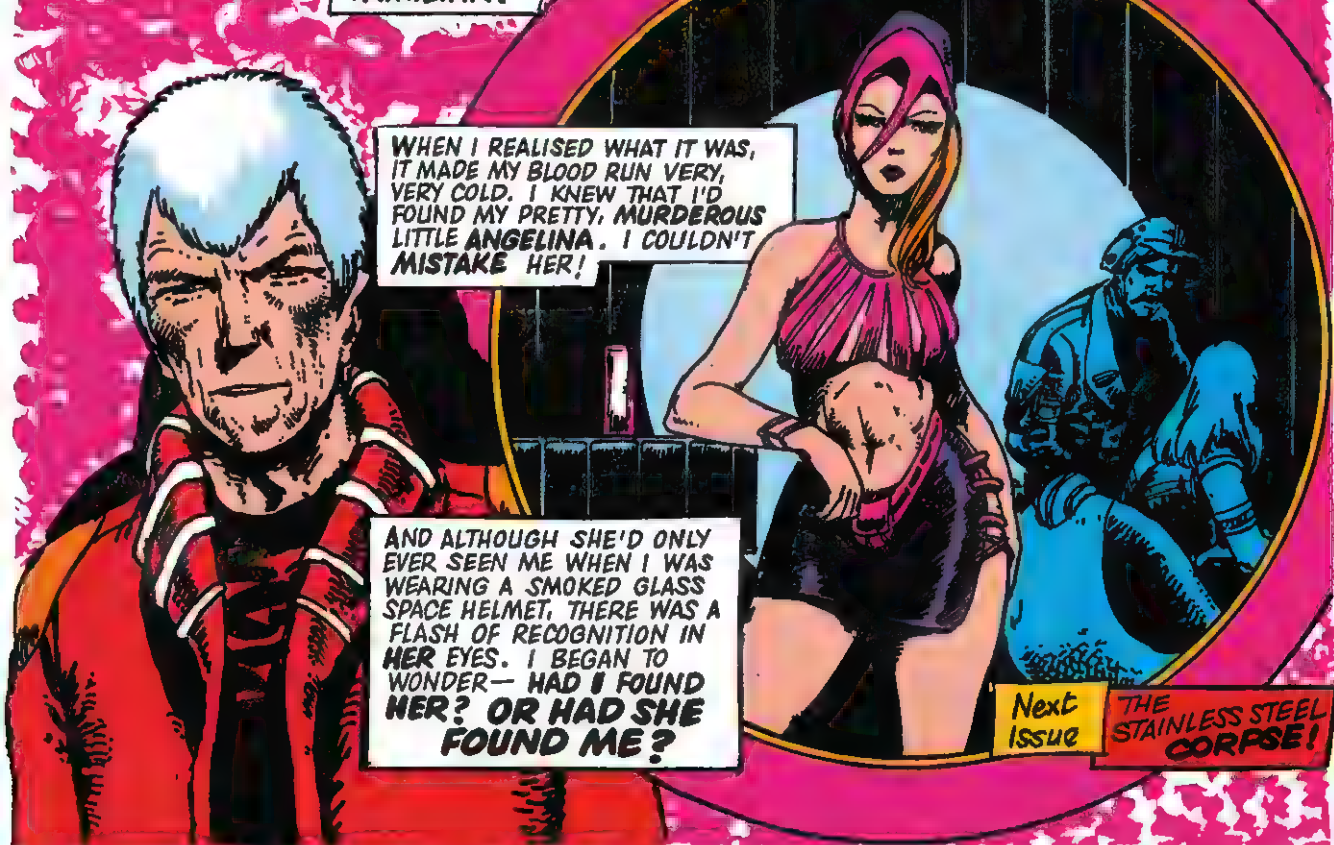


PLENTY OF GIRLS HAD TRIED TO SPEND MY MONEY DURING MY TOUR OF THE CITY'S BARS. BUT THERE WAS SOMETHING DIFFERENT ABOUT THIS ONE...

SOMETHING FAMILIAR!

WHEN I REALISED WHAT IT WAS, IT MADE MY BLOOD RUN VERY, VERY COLD. I KNEW THAT I'D FOUND MY PRETTY, MURDEROUS LITTLE ANGELINA. I COULDN'T MISTAKE HER!

AND ALTHOUGH SHE'D ONLY EVER SEEN ME WHEN I WAS WEARING A SMOKED GLASS SPACE HELMET, THERE WAS A FLASH OF RECOGNITION IN HER EYES. I BEGAN TO WONDER— HAD I FOUND HER? OR HAD SHE FOUND ME?



Next Issue

THE STAINLESS STEEL CORPSE!



The Stainless Steel Rat

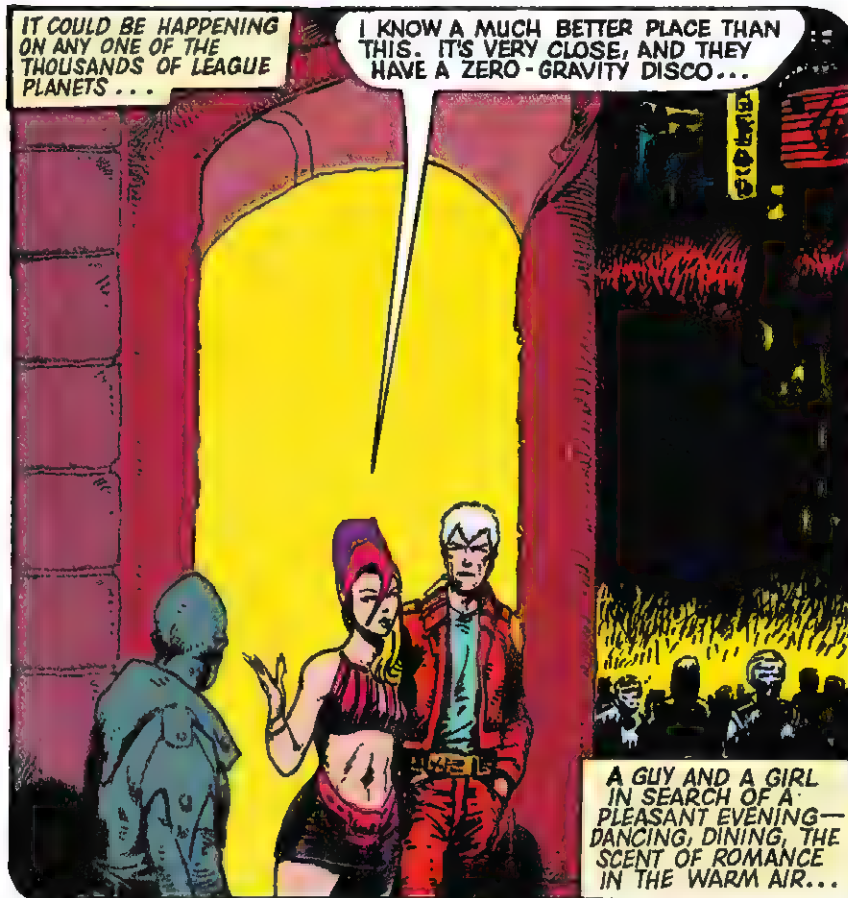


SCRIPT:
KELVIN GOSNELL

ART:
CARLOS EZQUERRA

LETTERING:
JACK POTTER

COLOR:
JANET LANDAU



IT COULD BE HAPPENING ON ANY ONE OF THE THOUSANDS OF LEAGUE PLANETS...

I KNOW A MUCH BETTER PLACE THAN THIS. IT'S VERY CLOSE, AND THEY HAVE A ZERO-GRAVITY DISCO...

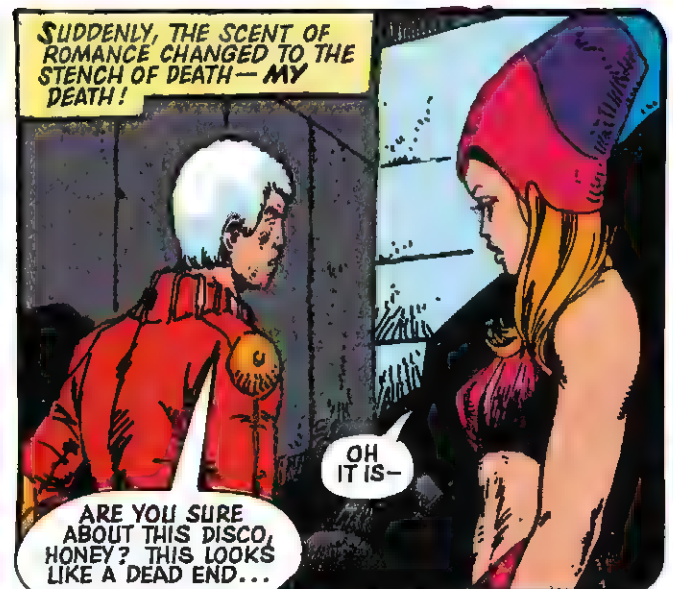
A GUY AND A GIRL IN SEARCH OF A PLEASANT EVENING—DANCING, DINING, THE SCENT OF ROMANCE IN THE WARM AIR...



'CEPT THAT THE GUY WAS YOURS TRULY, JIM diGRIZ, EX-SPECIAL CORPS AGENT, NOW ENGAGED ON A ONE-MAN HUNT FOR THE MOST MURDEROUS CRIMINAL IN THE GALAXY! THE PLANET WAS A PRIMITIVE MUDBALL CALLED FREIBUR...

IT'S JUST DOWN HERE...

AND MY GIRLFRIEND? WELL, MY HUNT HAD BEEN SUCCESSFUL: MEET ANGELINA—STEALER OF SPACESHIPS, COSMIC CROOK... AND THE PRETTIEST MASS-MURDERER I'D EVER MET!



SUDDENLY, THE SCENT OF ROMANCE CHANGED TO THE STENCH OF DEATH—MY DEATH!

OH IT IS—

ARE YOU SURE ABOUT THIS DISCO, HONEY? THIS LOOKS LIKE A DEAD END...



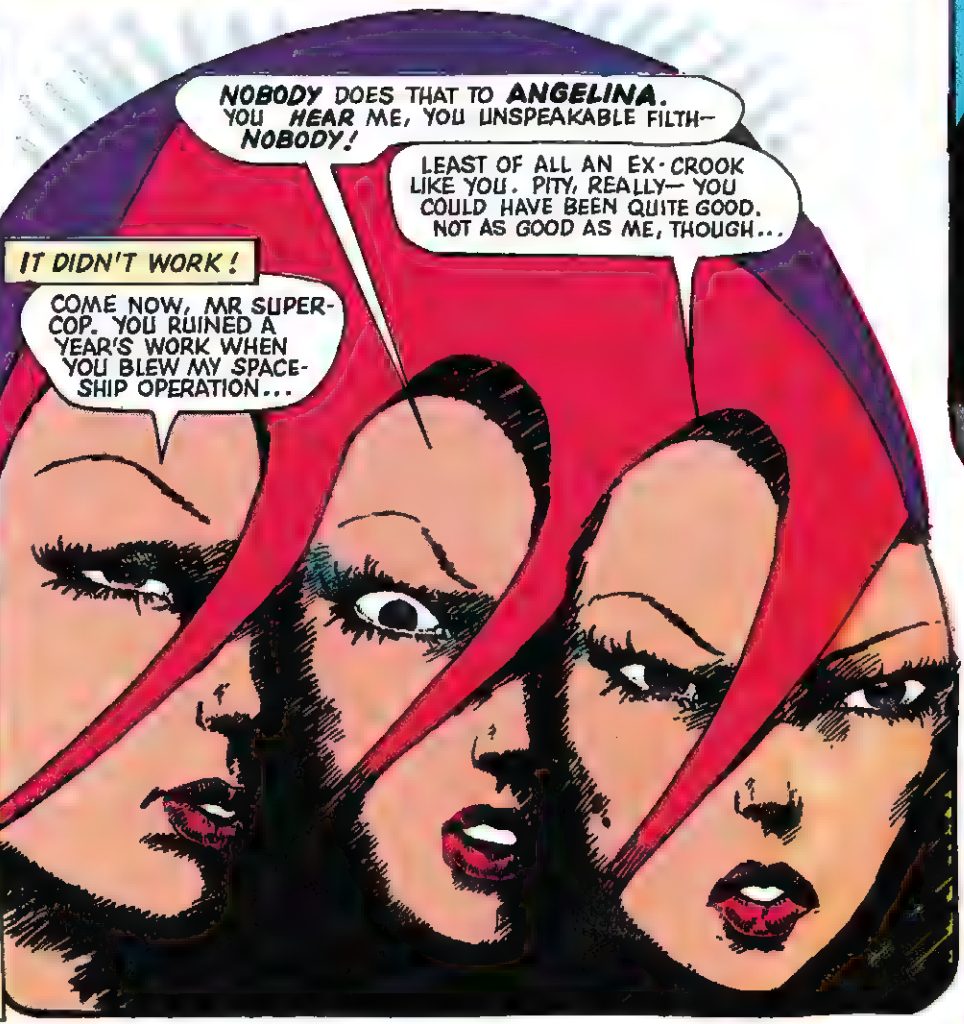
YOUR DEAD END, SCUMBALL!

I DIDN'T KNOW WHERE SHE'D HIDDEN THE .75 RECOILLESS. BUT I DID KNOW THAT IT POINTED ROCK STEADY AT MY GUTS!



WHAT—WHAT IS THIS RACKET, HONEY? I AIN'T DONE YOU ANY HARM...

ACTUALLY, I'D DONE HER PLENTY OF HARM, FOILING HER EVIL SCHEME AND ALL—BUT WHEN YOU'RE STARING DOWN A MUZZLE WIDE ENOUGH TO SWALLOW A SPACESHIP, YOU'D TRY ANYTHING...

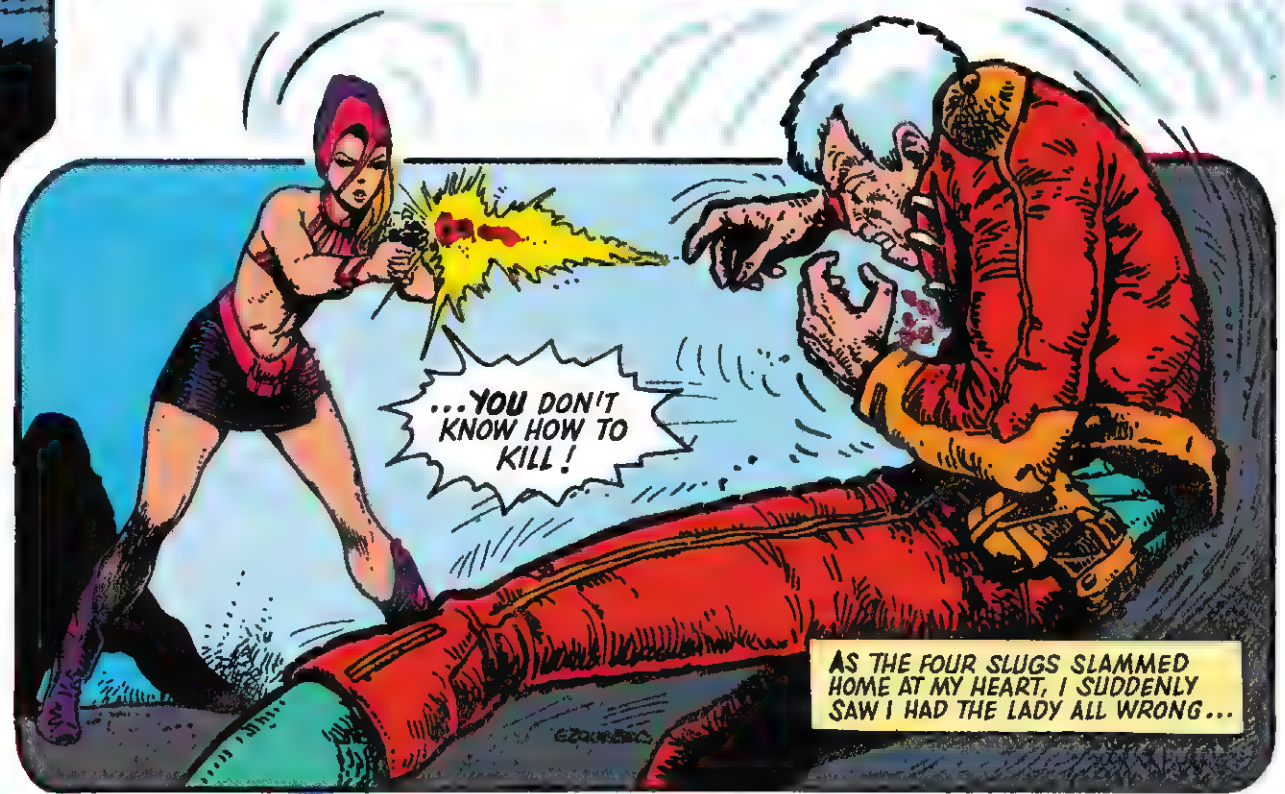


NOBODY DOES THAT TO ANGELINA. YOU HEAR ME, YOU UNSPEAKABLE FILTH—NOBODY!

LEAST OF ALL AN EX-CROOK LIKE YOU. PITY, REALLY—YOU COULD HAVE BEEN QUITE GOOD. NOT AS GOOD AS ME, THOUGH...

IT DIDN'T WORK!

COME NOW, MR SUPER-COP. YOU RUINED A YEAR'S WORK WHEN YOU BLEW MY SPACE-SHIP OPERATION...



...YOU DON'T KNOW HOW TO KILL!

AS THE FOUR SLUGS SLAMMED HOME AT MY HEART, I SUDDENLY SAW I HAD THE LADY ALL WRONG...



THEN THE FIFTH SLUG RIPPED TOWARDS MY HEAD...

AND EVERYTHING WENT BLACKER THAN THE SPACE BETWEEN THE GALAXIES!

SHE DIDN'T KILL BECAUSE SHE HAD TO—SHE KILLED BECAUSE SHE ENJOYED IT!

NEXT THING I REMEMBER WAS
THE GUY IN THE WHITE COAT...

DROID, GET
ME ANOTHER
XP4 PAIN KILLER.
HE'S COMING
ROUND!

MAN, WERE YOU **LUCKY!**
YOUR BODY ARMOUR TOOK
MOST OF THE SLUGS, AND IF
YOU HADN'T THROWN YOUR
ARM UP AT THE LAST MOMENT
THE ONE AT YOUR HEAD
WOULD HAVE TAKEN YOUR
BRAINS OUT!

BADLY BATTERED AS I WAS, I KNEW
THAT I WAS LOOKING A GOLDEN
OPPORTUNITY IN THE FACE...

I COULD SENSE
MOVEMENT. I WAS IN
AN AMBULANCE...

AMBULANCES
CASUALTY

I HAD TO CONTINUE THE HUNT FOR
ANGELINA— BEFORE SHE WIPED OUT
A WHOLE PLANET JUST FOR FUN.
SHE'D OBVIOUSLY LEFT ME FOR DEAD—
AND IF I COULD CONVINCE HER THAT
I REALLY **WAS** DEAD...

WELL, MY HUNT WOULD BE A
WHOLE LOT EASIER. THE DOC
HAD KINDLY LEFT HIS PEN ON
THE PAPERS, SO I USED IT FOR
A FEW ALTERATIONS...

WE'RE COMING INTO
THE HOSPITAL NOW.
TAKE THESE PAPERS AND
HAND 'EM TO THE CASUALTY
DOC WHEN THE DROID
GETS YOU INSIDE.

FREIBURGER KLINIK, A.G. FORM 01/70

Bad Contusions.
Bruising. Concussion
MASSIVE INTERNAL
HAEMORRHAGE - TERMINAL
SHOCK - DIED EN
ROUTE

MY PROGRAMMING SAYS PATIENTS NOT PERMITTED TO ALTER RECORDS --

I'M NOT A PATIENT— I'M A CORPSE! LOOK— IT SAYS SO HERE. WHAT DOES YOUR PROGRAMMING SAY ABOUT CORPSES ALTERING RECORDS?

ER-- NOTHING. BUT YOU CAN'T BE CORPSE --- CORPSE NOT TALK

WHO SAID, DUMBO? YOU ARE A VERY THICK CLASS M-10 ROBOT. I AM A VERY INTELLIGENT HUMAN BEING. IF I SAY I'M DEAD THEN I'M DEAD, GEDDIT?

NOT -- NOT UNDERSTAND. BRAIN NOT BIG ENOUGH FOR PROBLEM--

GOOD. THEN GO AND DO SOMETHING USEFUL, LIKE BASHING YOUR HEAD AGAINST THE WALL, HUH?

SO, A COUPLE OF MINUTES LATER --

HEY, WHAT GIVES WITH THE DROID?

WHO KNOWS? DAMN M-10'S ARE ALWAYS OVER-LOADING. ANYWAY, FORGET IT -- GET A TAG ON THIS STIFF'S FOOT AND SHIP HIM DOWN TO THE MEAT FRIDGE.

THE 'MEAT FRIDGE' WAS THE INTERN'S DELIGHTFUL PHRASE FOR THE MORGUE. NORMALLY I WOULDN'T BE SEEN DEAD IN A MORGUE— BUT I GOTTA HAVE SOME EXCUSE FOR MY BAD JOKES!

CONGRATULATIONS, MY POOR DEAD FRIEND, YOU ARE ABOUT TO MAKE HISTORY... INSTEAD OF STEALING FROM YOU, THE STAINLESS STEAL RAT IS ABOUT TO GIVE YOU SOMETHING!

—MY IDENTITY! YOU DIED A HERO, PAL!

NOW THAT I WAS OFFICIALLY DEAD, MY TRAIL WAS COLD. I "BORROWED" AN OVERCOAT AND HEADED BACK TO MY HOTEL ROOM— FAST...

SERIOUSLY— IT WAS EXACTLY WHERE I WANTED TO BE!

THE PAINKILLERS AND ANTI-BIOTICS WERE WEARING OFF WHEN I GOT THERE, AND I KNEW I'D HAVE TO GIVE MY SHATTERED FRAME TIME TO RECOVER...

THE BIONIC SPLINT ON MY ARM WORKED BEAUTIFULLY— THE FLESH GREW BACK IN A FEW DAYS.

BUT STILL I STAYED IN MY ROOM. I PATCHED THE COMM- CONSOLE INTO FREIBUR'S MAIN NEWS AND EDUCATION NETWORK...

FROM THE NEWS, I WANTED A SIGN OF FURTHER NASTY DEEDS FROM MY ANGELINA. BUT THERE WAS NOTHING...

FROM EDUCATION— AS MUCH KNOWLEDGE OF FREIBUR AS I COULD GET. I WANTED TO WORK OUT EXACTLY WHAT ANGIE WANTED FROM THIS PLANET!

THE ANSWER TO THE LAST QUESTION WAS EASY: SHE WANTED EVERYTHING— THE WHOLE DAMN PLANET— TO ESTABLISH HERSELF A BASE AS PIRATE WARLORD OF THE SPACEWAYS!

NEXT QUESTION— HOW? EASY— START A REVOLUTION! BUT THERE I LOST HER. WE WERE BOTH CRIMINALS, BUT I WAS WAY OUT OF MY DEPTH IN WHOLESALE SLAUGHTER. I'D HAVE TO BE AS INSANE AS SHE WAS TO EVEN THINK ABOUT IT!

WITH A SHUDDER OF HORROR, I REALISED THERE WAS ONLY ONE THING I COULD DO...

BY GRUD! THAT'S IT! BUT IF ANYTHING GOES WRONG, I COULD END UP AS BLOOD-CRAZY AS ANGELINA—OR EVEN WORSE!

IN ORDER TO UNDERSTAND THE LADY, TO GUESS WHAT SHE'S GOING TO DO, I'VE GOT TO BECOME TOTALLY AND COMPLETELY INSANE. I'VE GOT TO BECOME A MAD KILLER FOR A DAY. I KNOW HOW TO DO IT, BUT...

THERE COULDN'T BE ANY MORE 'BUTS'... I HAD TO DO IT!

CONTINUED ON 2ND PAGE FOLLOWING.



EAGLE COMICS **6** ISSUE RODENT SERIES

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NOV
No.2

The Stainless Steel Rat™

Based on the book by Harry Harrison, ©H Harrison 1981



The Stainless Steel Rat issue 2 cover, art by Carlos Ezquerro, 1995

MY NEW
LIFE BEGAN
THE
FOLLOWING
DAY...

YEECH! CALL THAT A FREIBUR FIREBALL? YOU KNOW HOW TO MIX DRINKS LIKE I CAN WARP WITHOUT A SPACESHIP!

EH? WHAT YOU MEAN, MISTER...?

YOU SLIMY TOAD! I MEAN THAT UNLESS YOU REFUND MY MONEY I'M GONNA REARRANGE YOUR FEATURES!

AIN'T NO CAUSE TO TALK TO HENRY LIKE THAT...

HENRY DIDN'T MEAN NO HARM, MISTER.

HENRY'S A GOOD BARMAN—

—AND THIS IS A GOOD BAR. WE DON'T WANT ANY TROUBLE.

TROUBLE? I DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT TROUBLE, UNLESS YOU MEAN...

... THIS SORTA TROUBLE!

UUUURGH!

... OR THIS!

RAGH!

... OR MAYBE A LITTLE OF THIS!

UUUH!

AND AS FOR YOU, BARMAN— YOU CHOSE THE WRONG GUY TO MAKE A FOOL OF!

YOU'RE A DOG! YOU'RE ALL DOGS ON THIS STINKING MUDBALL OF A PLANET!

I WANNA KILL YA ALL!

WHEN I FINALLY REACHED MY HOTEL ROOM, I ADDRESSED A FEW WORDS TO THE BOTTLE OF NASTY FLUID THAT I'D USED TO INDUCE MY "MADNESS"...

MAN! AM I GLAD I DON'T HAVE TO TOUCH THIS MIND-ROTTING STUFF AGAIN! ONLY ONE PLACE FOR IT NOW!



SHE WANTS THE WHOLE PLANET!
JIM, ME BOY—IT'S ABOUT TIME YOU PICKED UP A FEW NEW FRIENDS ON THE PLANET OF FREIBUR—STARTING WITH THE KING!

BYE BYE, NASTY FLUID. AT LEAST YOU SERVED YOUR PURPOSE. NOW I **KNOW** WHAT IT FEELS LIKE TO BE **TOTALLY INSANE**—JUST LIKE ANGELINA! SHE WON'T BE CONTENT TO PULL JUST A FEW GOOD BANK JOBS. OH, NO...

AND SO, HAVING DECIDED THAT THE KING OF FREIBUR WAS GOING TO BE ANGIE'S TARGET, A FEW DAYS LATER SAW ME HEADING TO MEET THE FELLOW...

AND WHAT BETTER OCCASION TO CHOOSE THAN THE GREAT PAN-FREIBUR AERO-JOUST, OPEN TO ALL-COMERS!

OPEN TO ALL FREIBURIANS, THAT IS. SO I HAD TO BECOME GRAV BENT, A LITTLE- KNOWN COUNT FROM SOME OUT-OF-THE WAY DISTRICT, COMPLETE WITH DROOPY MOUSTACHE!

GRAV BENT, I'D DECIDED, WAS RENOWNED FOR HIS ECCENTRIC BEHAVIOUR— LIKE LANDING IN THE MIDDLE OF A BANQUET!

HMM. THERE'S THE AERO-JOUST LANDING FIELD. DON'T THINK I'LL USE IT, THOUGH!

I SAY, MILDRED! ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

OF COURSE I'M NOT ALL RIGHT, YOU IDIOT! I'VE GOT A FACE FULL OF TRIFLE!

WHO— WHO ARE YOU?

BUT OUR BANQUET— YOU JUST RUINED OUR BANQUET!

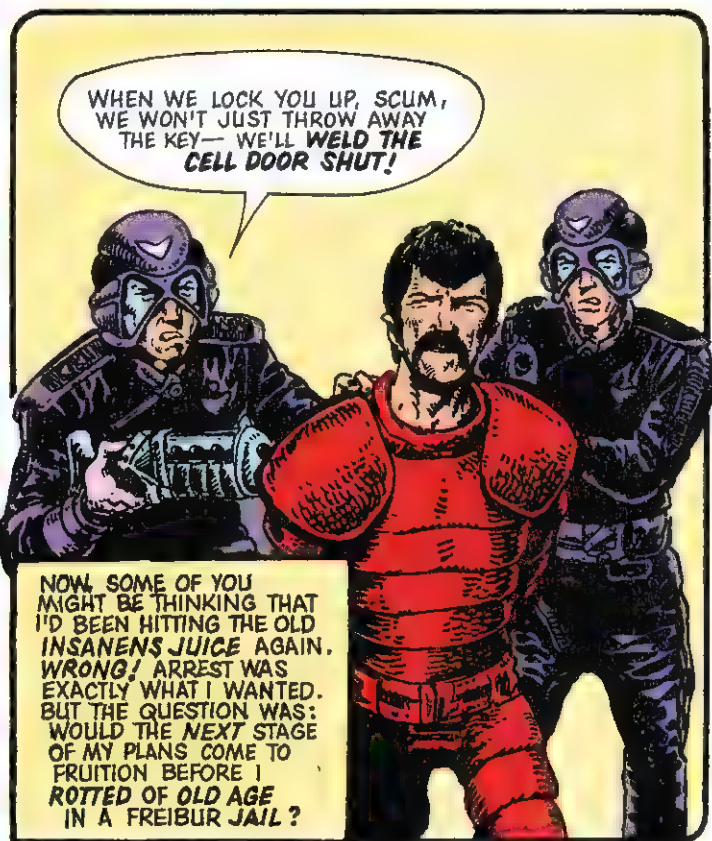
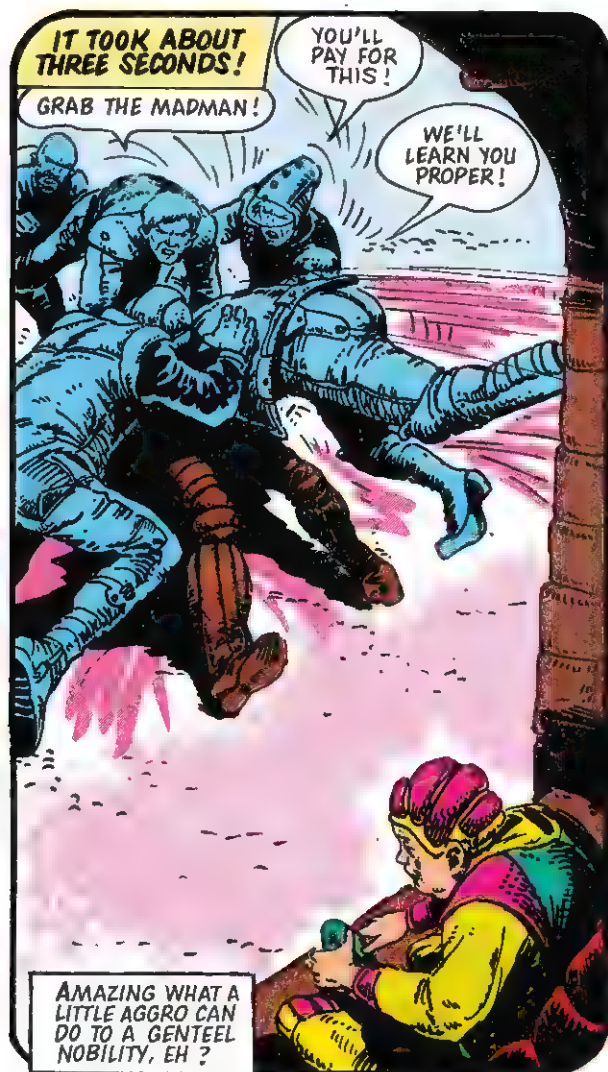
NEVER MIND— YOU CAN HAVE ANOTHER ONE NEXT YEAR!

NOW STAND ASIDE! I MUST FIND MYSELF A MOUNT, WHAT?

YOU'VE GOT TO UNDERSTAND THAT FREIBUR WAS A PRETTY BACKWARD PLANET BY GALACTIC STANDARDS. AND FREIBURIANS HAD SOME PRETTY MEDIEVAL IDEAS ABOUT SPORT!

WHAT A YAWN! SIRIUS SNAIL-RACING IS MORE EXCITING THAN THIS!

I AM COUNT GRAV BENT, NEWLY RETURNED FROM SERVICE IN THE FREIBUR SPACE NAVY, AND I AM HERE TO JOUST!



I SOON FOUND OUT. DAYS LATER,
IN A DUNGEON DEEP BELOW
THE ROYAL PALACE OF FREIBUR,
SOMETHING STIRS...

WHO'S THAT?
WHAT DO YOU
WANT?

UP QUICKLY
AND GET DRESSED.
YOU'RE GETTING
OUT OF HERE!

AHA! I SEE YOUR
GAME, ASSASSINS!
YOU ARE TO KILL ME
AND MAKE IT LOOK
LIKE **SUICIDE**!
COME ON THEN,
TRY IT— I'M
READY!

SHUT
THE
BIG MOUTH,
IDIOT! WE'RE
FRIENDS!

I HAVE NO FRIENDS
ON THIS PLANET OF
CORRUPTION! TAKE
THAT, YOU BOUNDER!

UUUNF!

HE'S NUTS, BOSS!
WHADDA WE DO?

TRANK
HIM!

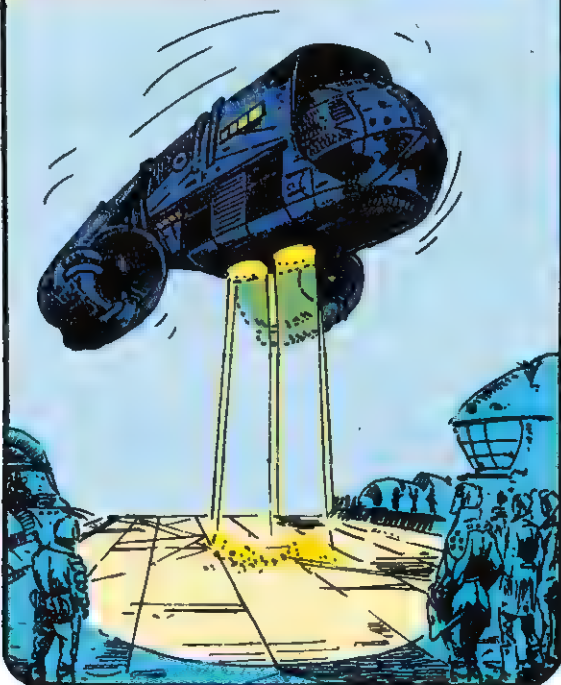
BLINDFOLD HIM AND
GET HIM INTO THE
FLYER— FAST!

THE PINPRICK OF THE TRANK DART
WAS THE LAST THING I REMEMBER.
WHEN I CAME TO, WE WERE
APPROACHING THE CRAZIEST
BUILDING I'D EVER SEEN—

IT WAS A HAPPY SIGHT! IT MEANT
THAT THE GAMBLE I'D TAKEN BY
MASQUERADING AS **GRAY BENT**
AND GETTING MYSELF THROWN IN
JAIL HAD PAID OFF!

NOW FREIBUR'S REVOLUTIONARIES
HAD SPRUNG ME, AS I'D HOPED,
AND WERE TAKING ME TO THEIR NEST...
A NEST IN WHICH I WAS SURE I'D FIND
THE SWEET GIRL I WAS HUNTING —
**ANGELINA, MASS MURDERER BY
ROYAL APPOINTMENT!**

THE GUY HEADING THE RECEPTION COMMITTEE WAS COUNT RDENRUNDT. I'D MARKED HIM DOWN AS A GRADE 9 IDIOT...



BY ME BLASTER! THAT'S TALK I UNDERSTAND! BUT IF THIS IS A TRICK...

BUT I THOUGHT I'D BETTER KEEP UP THE OUTRAGED ACT, JUST IN CASE...

GOING TO TORTURE ME, EH, RDENRUNDT? WHAT'LL IT BE— FINGERNAILS, EYEBALLS, SKINNING ALIVE?

YOU ARE NOT THE ONLY NOBLEMAN TO HAVE SUFFERED AT THE HANDS OF OUR CORRUPT KING!

MY DEAR GRAV BENT! WE ARE HERE TO WELCOME YOU AS A FRIEND AND FELLOW REVOLUTIONARY!

WE NEED MEN LIKE YOU— MEN WHO CAN COMMAND, MEN TO SWEEP AWAY THE TYRANT IN OUR GLORIOUS REVOLUTION!

I DECIDED THAT THE COUNT'S SPEECH WAS JUST WHAT WOULD SWAY THE IMPULSIVE, ENTHUSIASTIC GRAV BENT...

YOU'LL MARCH AGAINST NO-ONE YET!

NO TRICK! A BATTALION OF TROOPS SHALL BE YOURS. WE'LL MARCH AGAINST...

THE VICIOUS TONES CAME FROM THE LEADER OF MY RESCUERS. YOU DON'T FORGET A VOICE LIKE THAT...

I STRUGGLED NOT TO SMILE IN SATISFACTION AS ANGELINA CLIMBED DOWN FROM THE COCKPIT—

GRAV BENT'S CAPABILITIES WILL BE FULLY EVALUATED BEFORE WE PUT HIM IN CHARGE OF ANYTHING!

AH, YES— OF COURSE, MY DEAR. GRAV BENT, ALLOW ME TO PRESENT THE LADY ENGELA— OUR TACTICS AND WEAPONS EXPERT...

CALL ME "MY DEAR" AGAIN, AND I'LL EAT YOUR LIVER! TAKE HIM TO HIS QUARTERS...

MY QUARTERS WERE A GARRET AT THE TOP OF THE CASTLE.

SO IT WAS TIME FOR GRAY BENT TO BECOME SLIPPERY JIM digriz AGAIN AND TAKE A LOOK AROUND. ANGIE WOULD HAVE THE INSIDE WELL GUARDED, SO I TOOK THE ONLY ROUTE SHE COULDN'T COVER ...

... OUTSIDE ! THE MONO-FILAMENT WIRE WITH BELT EXTRUDER WAS A GREAT GIMMICK—THE WIRE WAS VIRTUALLY INVISIBLE, BUT STRONG ENOUGH TO CARRY SEVERAL TONS...

IT WAS OBVIOUS THAT THE 'WEAPONS EXPERT' WAS REALLY THE LEADER— AND I WAS ANXIOUS TO DISCOVER EXACTLY WHAT SHE WAS LEADING !

THERE WERE SOME BIG VENT DUCTS ON THE LOWER FLOORS. IF ANGIE HAD ANY LARGE FIGHTING HARDWARE, IT WOULD BE IN THE HALLS BEYOND ...

SLIPPERY JIM GUESSED RIGHT AGAIN !

BY GRUD !

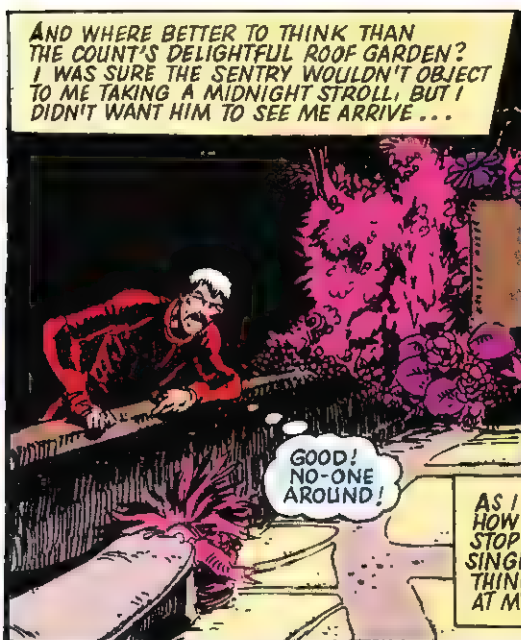
SHE HAD A SQUADRON OF VIXEN GROUND ATTACK CRAFT ...

ENOUGH ATOMIC HOWITZERS TO PULP A CITY ...

AND A SMALL UNIT OF MOLES — UNDERGROUND TANKS THAT LASERED THEIR WAY THROUGH BED-ROCK TO SURFACE IN THE MIDST OF THE ENEMY !



I'D SEEN ENOUGH!
ALL OF HER HARD-
WARE WAS FULLY
ASSEMBLED AND
READY FOR USE.
IT'D TAKE MORE THAN
ONE MAN TO STOP IT.
BUT I ONLY HAD ONE
MAN—ME!
I NEEDED TIME TO
THINK...



AND WHERE BETTER TO THINK THAN
THE COUNT'S DELIGHTFUL ROOF GARDEN?
I WAS SURE THE SENTRY WOULDN'T OBJECT
TO ME TAKING A MIDNIGHT STROLL, BUT I
DIDN'T WANT HIM TO SEE ME ARRIVE...

GOOD!
NO-ONE
AROUND!

AS I IDLY PONDERED
HOW I WAS GOING TO
STOP A REVOLUTION
SINGLE-HANDED, SOME-
THING WAS NAGGING
AT MY BRAIN...



HMM.
SOMETHING
WRONG
HERE...



I REALISED WHAT IT WAS AT THE SAME MOMENT
AS I SAW THE BODY. THERE WAS A SENTRY—
BUT HE WAS VERY DEAD!



HIS ASSASSIN HAD LEFT ONE
TRACE...

MONO-FILAMENT
POINT. I'M NOT THE ONLY
ONE USING A WIRE
TONIGHT!



HE'D USED IT TO DROP TO ONE OF
THE TOP-FLOOR BALCONIES. YOU
DIDN'T HAVE TO BE A GENIUS TO GUESS
THAT HE WASN'T HERE TO DELIVER A
BOX OF CHOCOLATES...

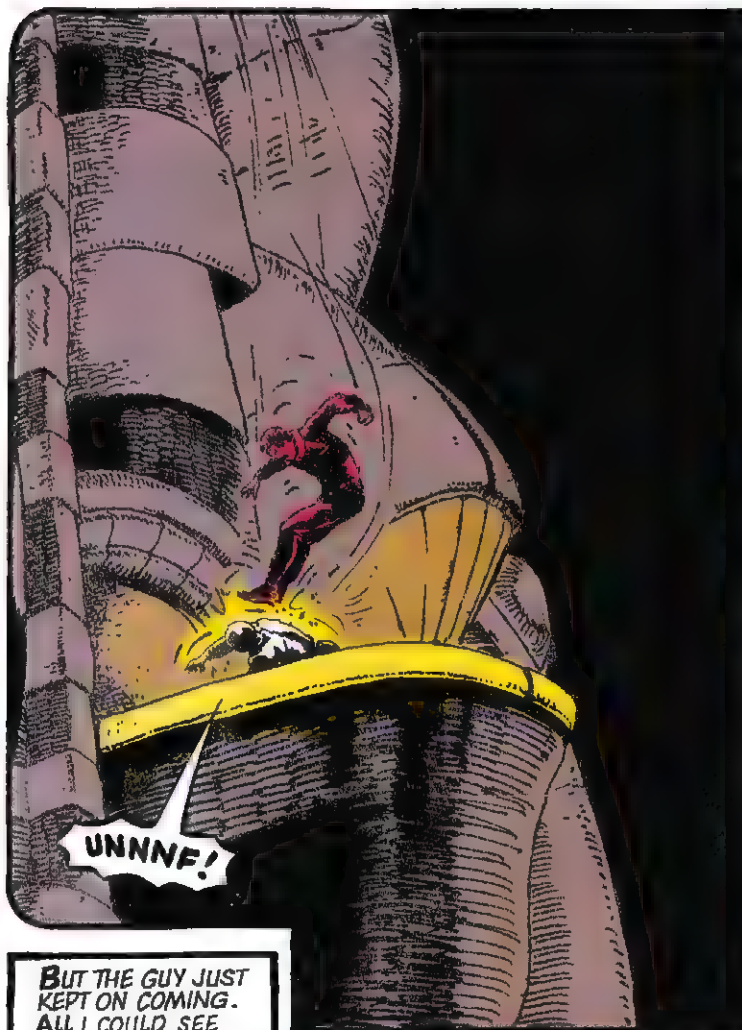
THAT'S
ANGIE'S ROOM!
HE'S GONNA
KILL HER!

I DIDN'T STOP TO THINK ABOUT MY
CHANCE OF HITTING THE GUY... NOR
THE TWO-MILE DROP IF I MISSED...
NOR THE FACT THAT IT WAS MY JOB
TO KILL HER, TOO!



I JUMPED!





UNNFF!

BUT THE GUY JUST KEPT ON COMING. ALL I COULD SEE WAS THE DEADLY TIP OF THAT KNIFE ... AND I KNEW THAT I HAD TO DO SOMETHING I'D NEVER DONE BEFORE —



THE ASSASSIN WAS FAST — VERY FAST!



AND HE KNEW HIS TRADE — KILLING!

AAH! NERVE POISON ON BLADE! ONE TOUCH AND I'M DEAD!



GOTTA KEEP HIM AWAY —

UUNNHH!



KILL!



OOUUUF!

IT'S ME OR YOU, PAL —



AND IT AIN'T GONNA BE ME!

AAAAAARGH!

AS THE ASSASSIN CONTINUED ON HIS TWO-MILE FALL TO OBLIVION, I HEARD THE DOOR SWISH OPEN BEHIND ME—

WHO—WHO'S THERE?

THE CHRISTMAS PIXIE! WHO THE HELL D'YOU THINK IT IS?

BY THE TIME SHE REACHED ME, I'D RECOVERED MY COMPOSURE AND REMEMBERED TO PLAY THE PART OF THE THICK BUT LOYAL GRAV BENT...

GOOD EVENING, LADY ENGELA. THERE WAS A MAN—I BELIEVE HE WANTED TO KILL YOU, I—ER—PERSUADED HIM NOT TO...

INDEED! HOW COURAGEOUS OF YOU. COME INSIDE—I MUST TALK TO YOU...

I WAS RESTLESS, TOOK A WALK ON THE ROOF GARDEN... HEARD A NOISE...

AS I JABBERED OUT MY EXPLANATION, I WATCHED HER. SHE WAS PAINFULLY PRETTY—BUT I KNEW THAT DEEP INSIDE HER SOUL, SHE WAS VERY UGLY! SHE HAD KILLED MANY TIMES FOR SHEER ENJOYMENT—AND NOW SHE PLANNED TO RULE THIS PLANET!

I KNEW THAT I SHOULD HAVE LET THE ASSASSIN KILL HER—THAT WOULD HAVE STOPPED THE REVOLUTION SHE'D PLANNED AND DONE MY JOB FOR ME. BUT I'D BEEN HUNTING HER FOR SO LONG NOW, SHE WAS LIKE A SICK FRIEND. SHE NEEDED HELP, NOT EXECUTION...

BUT—BUT THE COUNT IS ONE OF OUR FELLOW REVOLUTIONARIES. WHY SHOULD HE SEEK YOUR DEATH, LADY ENGELA? WE ARE ALL FIGHTING FOR THE COMMON GOOD...

CAN YOU DRIVE A MOLE TANK?

ER, YES. BUT WHY...?

HE WAS PROBABLY ONE OF THE COUNT'S MEN. I'VE BEEN EXPECTING SOMETHING LIKE THIS.

IF YOU BELIEVE THAT, GRAV BENT, YOU'LL BELIEVE ANYTHING! HE HAS USED ME TO SUPPLY HIS FIGHTING HARDWARE. WHEN THE REVOLUTION STARTS, I WILL BE WORTH NOTHING TO HIM!

GOOD! THEN WE'LL START THE REVOLUTION WITHOUT THE COUNT! HE WILL THEN BE OF NO USE TO ME!

WE WENT TO THE CENTRAL CONTROL ROOM COMMANDING THE REVOLUTIONARIES AND THEIR STRIKE FORCE—

CONDITION RED!
CONDITION RED!
WE ARE UNDER
THREAT OF IMMINENT
ATTACK. F-DAY IS
ADVANCED TO NOW!
ALL GUN, TANK AND
AIRCRAFT CREWS
SCRAMBLE
IMMEDIATELY!

THE VIXEN FIGHTERS
WILL SOFTEN UP THE CAPITAL
FIRST, THEN THE HOWITZERS
WILL GIVE IT A GOOD POUNDING.
THEN WE, IN THE MOLES, WILL
EMERGE IN THE CENTRE OF THE
PALACE. THE FIGHTING WILL
BE OVER WITHIN HOURS.
THESE BARBARIANS HAVE NO
IDEA HOW TO FIGHT A REAL WAR..!

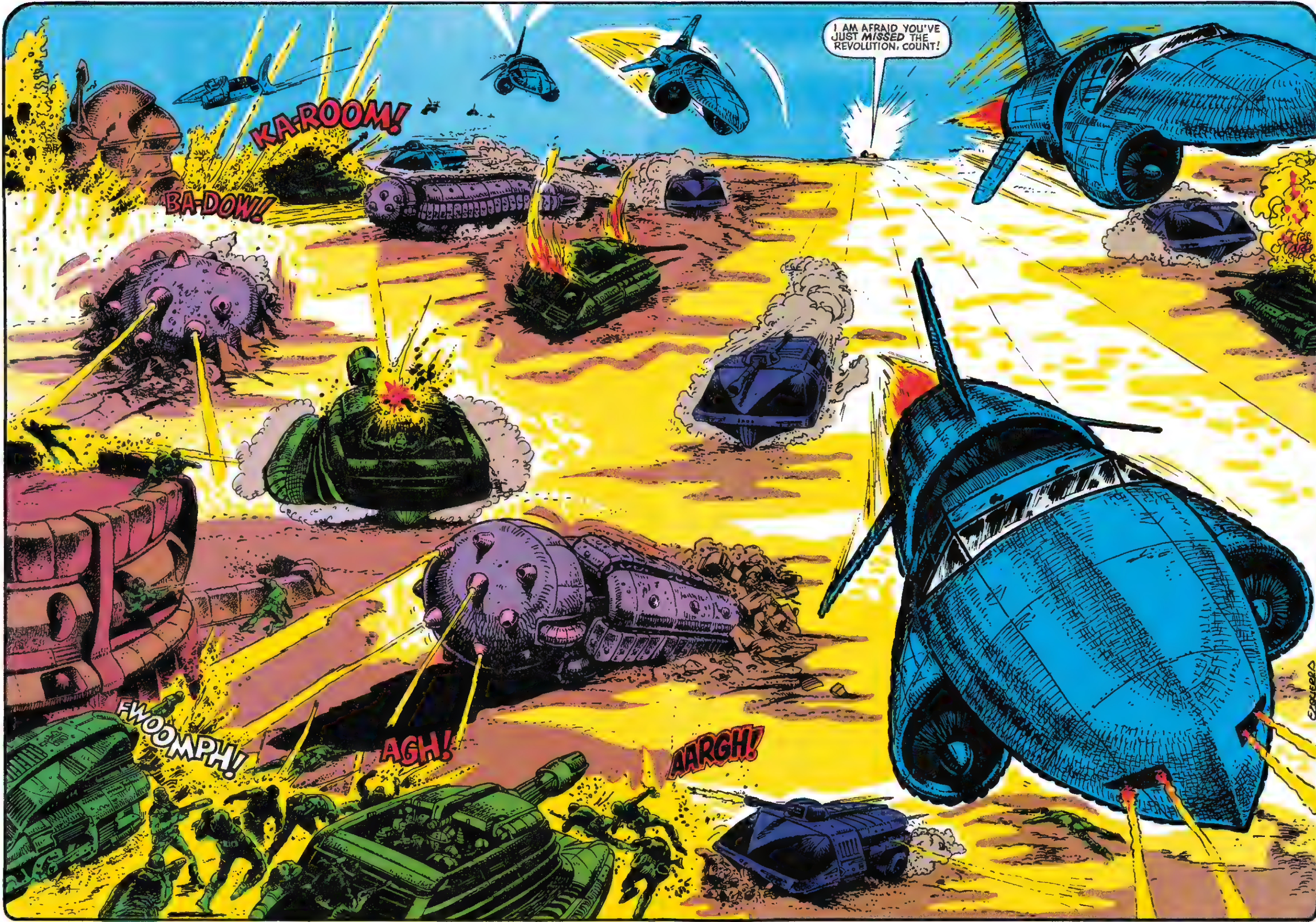
MINUTES
LATER...

LADY ENGELA! WH-WHAT ARE YOU
DOING HERE? WHY AREN'T YOU...?
WHAT'S HAPPENING?

"THE VIXENS
ARE ON THEIR
WAY TO THE
CAPITAL—"

THE
REVOLUTION'S
HAPPENING, MY
DEAR COUNT. TAKE
A LOOK OUTSIDE...

"THE HOWITZERS WILL
BE IN POSITION IN A
MATTER OF HOURS..."



I AM AFRAID YOU'VE JUST MISSED THE REVOLUTION, COUNT!

KA-ROOM!

BA-DOW!

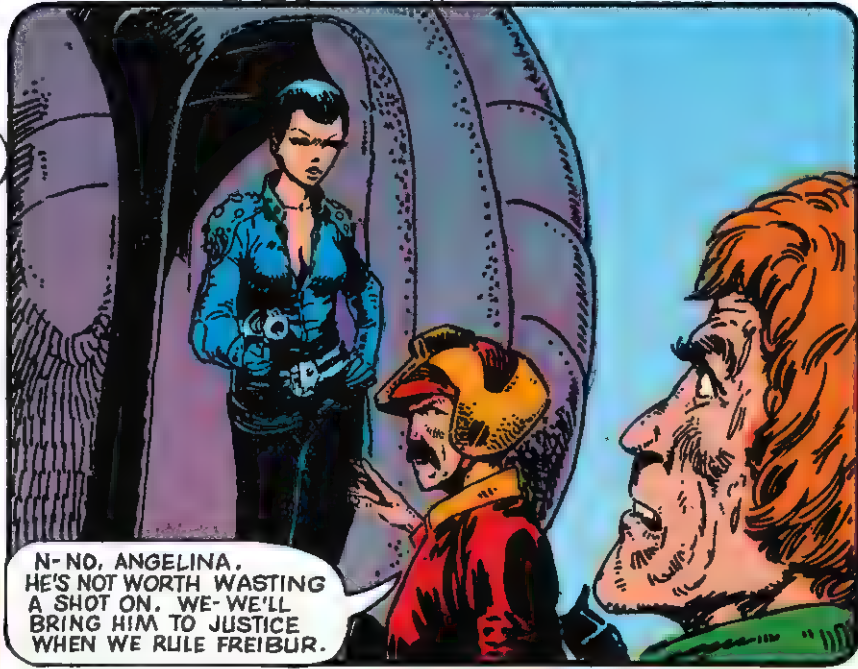
FWOOMP!

AGH!

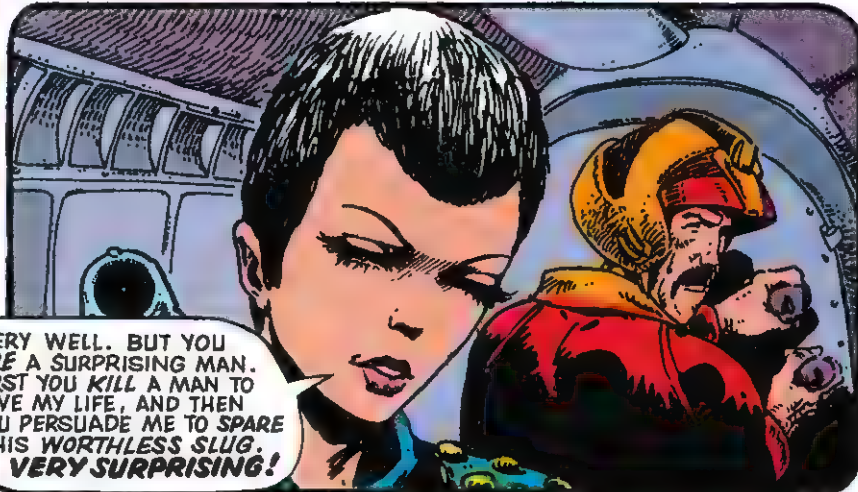
AARGH!

ESQUEERD

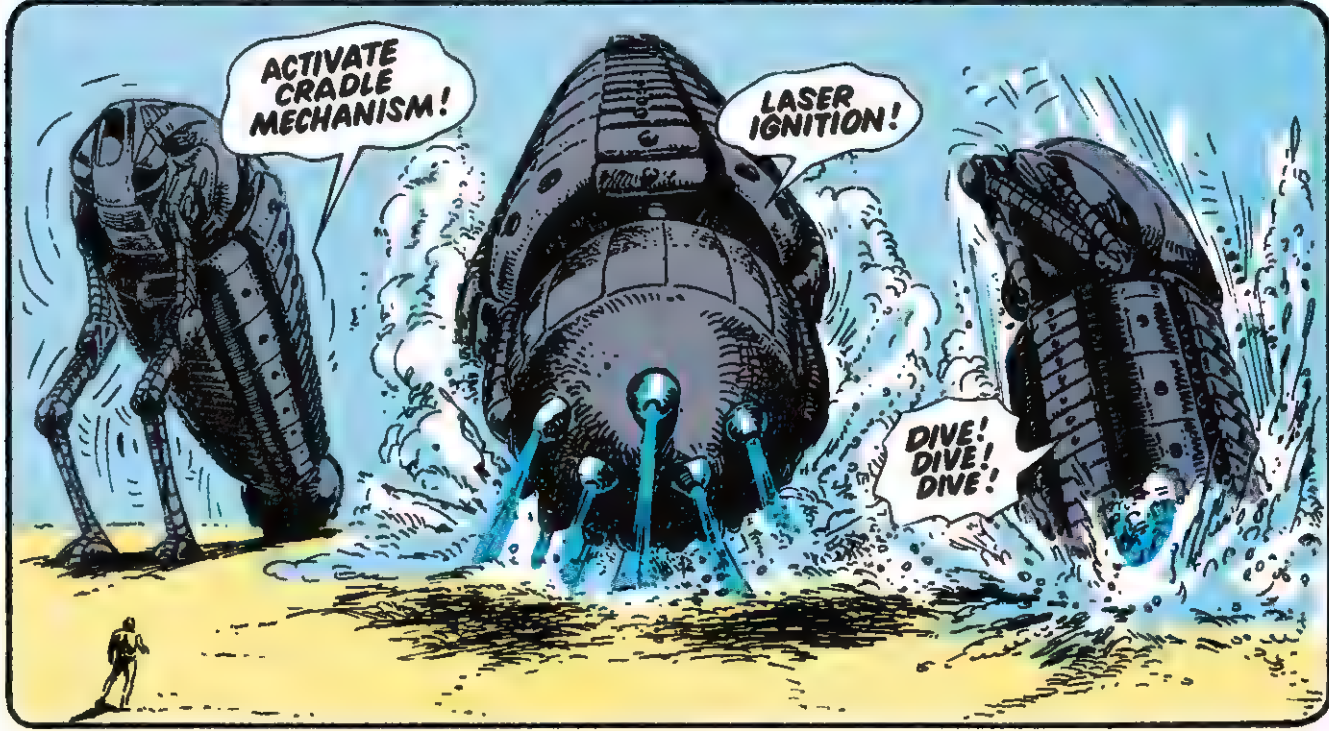
OH, BY THE WAY— IF YOU CAN STILL WALK AFTER I'VE SHOT YOUR LEGS OFF... YOU'LL FIND YOUR ASSASSIN SPREAD OVER A LARGE AREA AT THE BASE OF THE WALLS...



N-NO, ANGELINA. HE'S NOT WORTH WASTING A SHOT ON. WE-WE'LL BRING HIM TO JUSTICE WHEN WE RULE FREIBUR.



VERY WELL. BUT YOU ARE A SURPRISING MAN. FIRST YOU KILL A MAN TO SAVE MY LIFE, AND THEN YOU PERSUADE ME TO SPARE THIS WORTHLESS SLUG. VERY SURPRISING!



ACTIVATE CRADLE MECHANISM!

LASER IGNITION!

DIVE! DIVE! DIVE!

THE **MOLE**, AS YOU'LL HAVE GUESSED, WAS A VERY **SPECIAL** TYPE OF TANK— AN **UNDERGROUND** TANK! AS ANGIE AND I SET A COURSE FOR THE CAPITAL, I WAS WORRYING ABOUT HOW I WAS GOING TO STOP THE UNAVOIDABLE BLOODSHED. I HAD MORE TO WORRY ABOUT THAN THAT!




I ALWAYS THOUGHT ANGELINA WAS ONE OF THE **NICEST** NAMES I'VE USED IN MY MURKY PAST. HOW NICE OF YOU TO USE IT!

OH, DON'T LOOK SO SURPRISED! I TOOK THE TROUBLE TO CHECK WHEN YOU FIRST CAME HERE. GRAY BENT NEVER EXISTED. I **ALLOWED** YOU TO LIVE... BECAUSE YOU **INTEREST** ME!






I WANT TO KNOW
WHY YOU'VE HUNTED
ME HALFWAY ACROSS THE
GALAXY




YOU **KILLED** QUITE
EFFICIENTLY LAST NIGHT,
BUT YOU'VE TURNED DOWN
COUNTLESS CHANCES OF
KILLING ME! WHY?




LAST NIGHT
WAS SELF-
DEFENCE. I CAN'T
— I **WON'T** KILL
IN COLD
BLOOD.

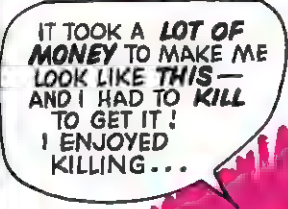
BUT **WHY** DO YOU HAVE TO KILL,
ANGIE? WITH YOUR NATURAL
CRIMINAL TALENT AND YOUR LOOKS,
YOU COULD BE THE **GREATEST**
CON-ARTIST IN THE
GALAXY!




SO YOU THINK I'M **PRETTY**, EH?
FANCY ME, DO YOU? LIKE ALL
THE **REST** OF THEM? WELL,
WHAT ABOUT THIS?



COULD YOU **FANCY** HER?
THAT'S HOW I WAS BORN,
MR RAT! **UGLIER** THAN
SIN— ONLY ONE STEP
AWAY FROM THE
MUTANT!



IT TOOK A **LOT** OF
MONEY TO MAKE ME
LOOK LIKE **THIS**—
AND I HAD TO **KILL**
TO GET IT!
I ENJOYED
KILLING...



IT'S
REVENGE,
SWEET
REVENGE ON
THE **PRETTY**
NORMS
WHO USED
TO **LAUGH**
AT ME!



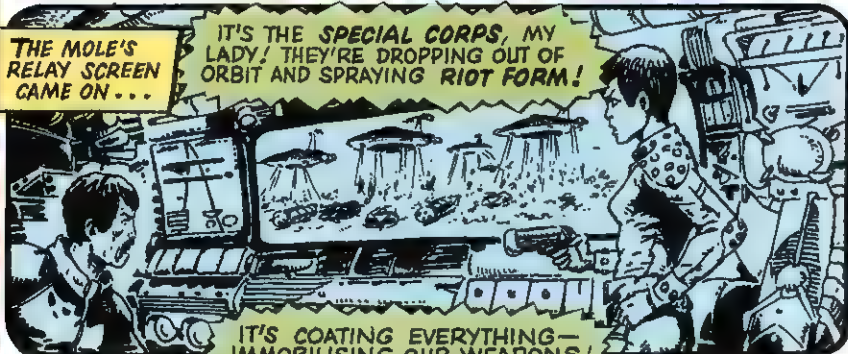
SO THAT'S 'WHY,' MR RAT!
ANGELINA KILLS FOR REVENGE
— REVENGE ON THE WHOLE
STINKING, BEAUTIFUL
HUMAN RACE!

ANGELINA,
LISTEN. YOU'RE ILL.
LET'S STOP THE KILLING NOW
AND GET AWAY FROM HERE—
GO SOMEWHERE WHERE IT'S
PEACEFUL, SOMEWHERE I CAN
HELP YOU GET BETTER!



AND THAT WAS AS FAR AS
I GOT. JUST THEN EVERY
ALARM IN THE MOLE
STARTED SCREAMING!

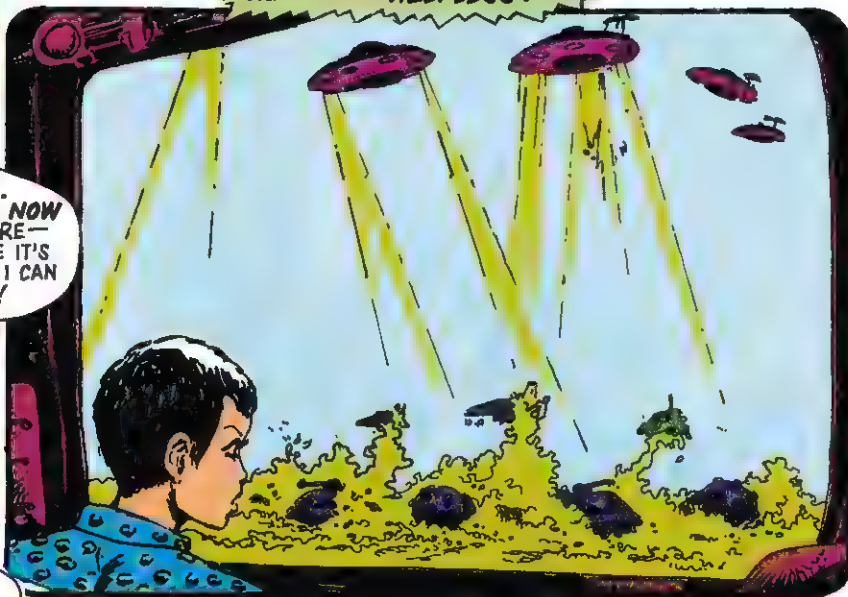
WHAT THE...? COME
IN, VIXEN LEADER.
WHAT THE HELL IS
HAPPENING UP THERE?



THE MOLE'S
RELAY SCREEN
CAME ON...

IT'S THE SPECIAL CORPS, MY
LADY! THEY'RE DROPPING OUT OF
ORBIT AND SPRAYING RIOT FORM!

IT'S COATING EVERYTHING—
IMMOBILISING OUR WEAPONS!
WE— WE'RE HELPLESS!



SO IT MEANT NOTHING, EH,
MR RAT? WHILE YOU SWEET-TALKED
ABOUT HELPING ME, YOU WERE
BETRAYING ME!

NO WAY!
I DIDN'T CALL
IN THE CORPS!
BELIEVE
ME!

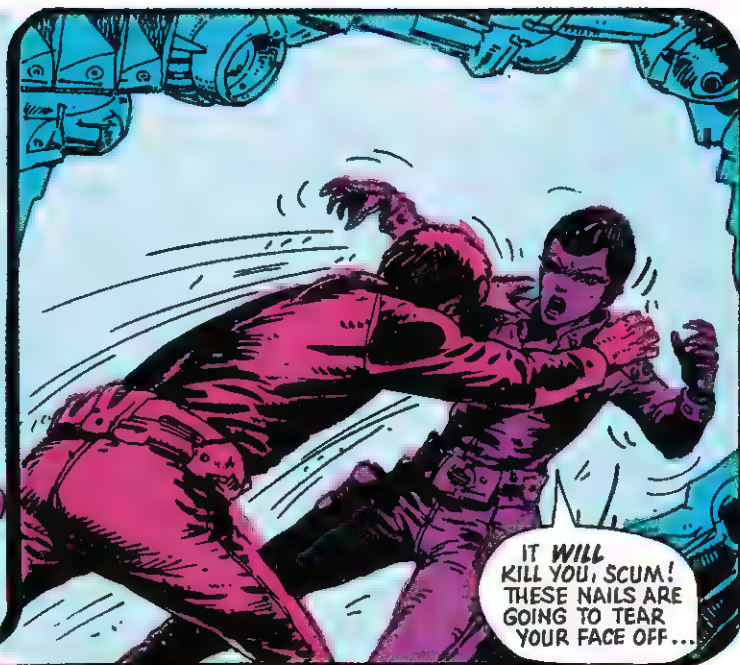


NEVER! YOU'RE LIKE ALL THE
REST OF THEM — FILTH!

AND NOW
YOU'RE GONNA BE
DEAD FILTH!

I USED THE
ONLY WEAPON
I HAD— MY
HELMET

WANNA BET,
SWEETHEART?
I'M GONNA HELP
YOU IF IT KILLS
ME!



IT WILL
KILL YOU, SCUM!
THESE NAILS ARE
GOING TO TEAR
YOUR FACE OFF...

...YOU'LL DIE
UGLY-UGLIER
THAN EVEN I
WAS!

AAAH!
—MY
FACE!

PIG! INSECT!
UGLEEEE!

I SWEAR THE LADY WAS MORE
DEADLY WITHOUT HER GUN!
AS I FOUGHT TO KEEP MY EYE-
BALLS INSIDE MY HEAD, I FELT
THE MOLE LURCH VIOLENTLY...

GEE WHIZ,
CHIEF! WHICH
ONE IS OUR
GUY?

IT WAS INSKIPP, MY OLD
SPECIAL CORPS BOSS! HE'D
DOCKED A CORPS MOLE ON TO
OUR ONE...

DON'T
MATTER.
FIRE AT
RANDOM!
HIT 'EM
BOTH!

I NEVER THOUGHT I'D BE
PLEASED TO GET STUCK BY
A TRANQUILISER DART....

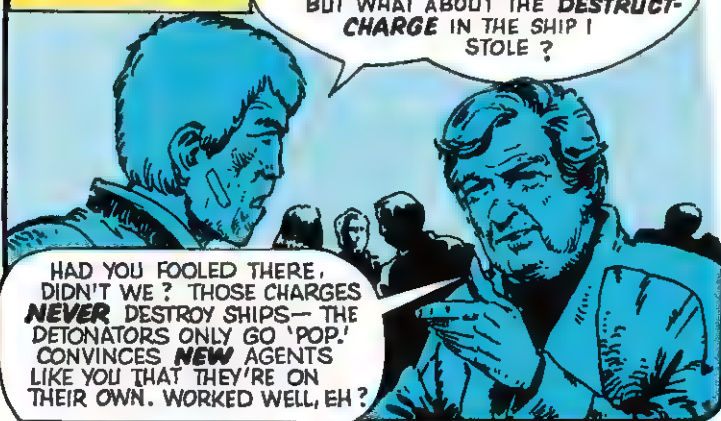
... BUT AS THE WARM
PAINLESS DARKNESS CLOSED
OVER ME, I WAS REALLY
RATHER GRATEFUL...

AND THAT JUST ABOUT WRAPPED UP THE WHOLE SORRY TALE. STILL UNCONSCIOUS, ANGIE AND I WERE WHISKED BACK TO THE CORPS' ASTEROID BASE. I DIDN'T SEE INSKIPP AGAIN UNTIL A FEW DAYS LATER...



AH, diGRIZ! GOOD TO SEE OUR **HERO** BACK IN CIRCULATION!

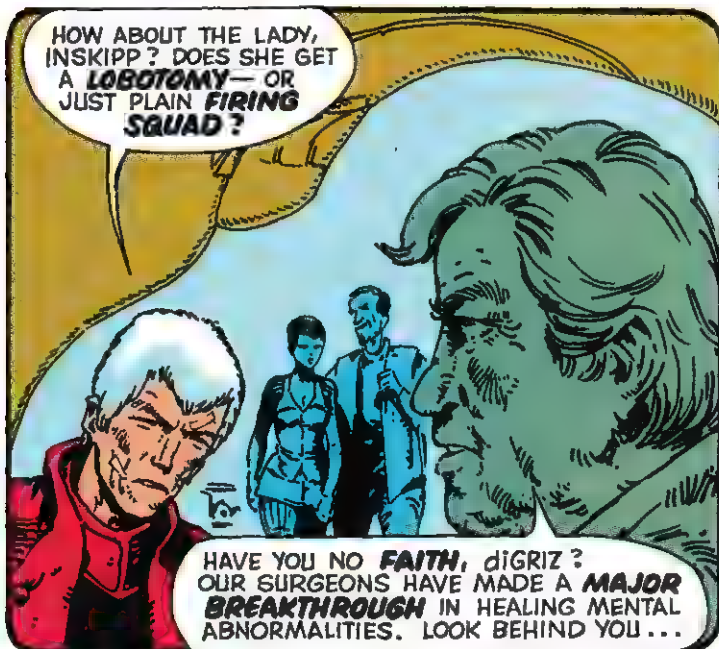
HE EXPLAINED A LOT OF THINGS...



SO YOU HAD A **TRACER** PLANTED ON ME IN THE AMBULANCE? BUT WHAT ABOUT THE **DESTRUCT-CHARGE** IN THE SHIP I STOLE?

HAD YOU FOOLED THERE, DIDN'T WE? THOSE CHARGES **NEVER** DESTROY SHIPS—THE DETONATORS ONLY GO 'POP.' CONVINCES **NEW** AGENTS LIKE YOU THAT THEY'RE ON THEIR OWN. WORKED WELL, EH?

HOW ABOUT THE LADY, INSKIPP? DOES SHE GET A **LOBOTOMY**—OR JUST PLAIN **FIRING SQUAD**?



HAVE YOU NO **FAITH**, diGRIZ? OUR SURGEONS HAVE MADE A **MAJOR BREAKTHROUGH** IN HEALING MENTAL ABNORMALITIES. LOOK BEHIND YOU...

HELLO. DON'T I KNOW YOU?

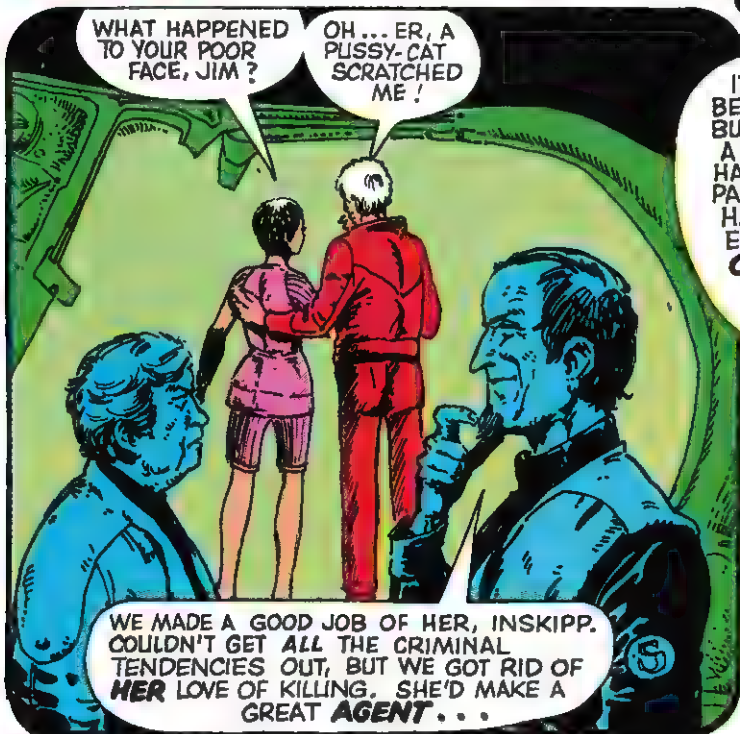
ER, YEAH, I THINK SO...



IT'S OKAY, diGRIZ—SHE'S PERFECTLY NORMAL NOW. HER MEMORIES OF HER PAST ARE RATHER **VAGUE**, THAT'S ALL.

WHAT HAPPENED TO YOUR POOR FACE, JIM?

OH... ER, A PUSSY-CAT SCRATCHED ME!



WE MADE A GOOD JOB OF HER, INSKIPP. COULDN'T GET ALL THE CRIMINAL TENDENCIES OUT, BUT WE GOT RID OF **HER** LOVE OF KILLING. SHE'D MAKE A GREAT **AGENT**...

IT'S AGAINST MY BETTER JUDGEMENT, BUT THEY **WOULD** MAKE A GREAT TEAM. WE'LL HAVE TO WATCH THE PAIR OF THEM LIKE HAWKS, THOUGH—IF EVER THEY TURNED **CRIMINAL** AGAIN, WE'D **NEVER STOP THEM!**



POOR INSKIPP — HE
SHOULD HAVE TRUSTED
HIS BETTER JUDGEMENT.
'CAUSE A COUPLE OF
WEEKS LATER...

WHERE TO,
MRS digRIZ? THE **UNIVERSE**
IS YOURS TO **COMMAND**. THERE'S
A NICE **BANK** ON **ALDERBARAN 4**,
OR I KNOW A LITTLE **JEWELLERY**
STORE ON **SOLARIS 3**...

OH, YOU
CHOOSE, DEAR.
I DON'T MIND
AT ALL.

BUT WHAT ABOUT
INSKIPP'S SHIP?
WILL HE BE
VERY ANGRY?

HE'LL BE
ENORMOUSLY
ANGRY. BUT HE'S
BOUND TO WANT
US FOR A **JOB**
SOONER OR LATER—
IF HE WANTS US
BADLY ENOUGH,
HE'LL **CATCH**
US!

WHAAAT?

BUT THEY CAN'T! NO,
I **DIDN'T** KNOW WE HAD
A **PRIEST** ON THE BASE
EITHER... THEY'VE
STOLEN **WHAT?**
AAARGH! I **KNEW** IT!

CORPS-CHIEF
INSKIPP
PERSONAL
UNAUTHORISED
USE FORBIDDEN

SLIPPERY JIM RETURNS NEXT MONTH
IN "THE **STAINLESS STEEL**
RAT SAVES THE WORLD!"



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The Stainless Steel Rat™

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The Stainless Steel Rat issue 3 cover, art by Carlos Ezquerro, 1995



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JAN
No.4

The Stainless Steel Rat™

Based on the book by Harry Harrison; ©H. Harrison 1972.



The Stainless Steel Rat issue 4 cover, art by Carlos Ezquerra, 1986

SINCE THE DAWN OF TIME THERE HAVE BEEN CRIMINALS. THEY'VE BEEN CALLED ALL SORTS OF NAMES - FOOTPADS, FELONS, HIGHWAYMEN... MOSTLY, THOUGH, THEY'VE BEEN NAMED AFTER A SMALL, FURRY, DIFFICULT-TO-CATCH RODENT - **THE RAT!**



EVEN IN YOUR FAR FUTURE US RATS WILL STILL BE THERE. BUT IN A SOCIETY OF FERRO-CARBON SPACESHIPS AND PLASTI-STEEL CITIES YOU HAVE TO BE A VERY SPECIAL RAT...
A STAINLESS STEEL RAT!

SOME OF YOU WILL KNOW ME ALREADY - **JAMES BOLIVAR DIGRIZ**, AGENT FOR THE **SPECIAL CORPS**, THE ELITE GALACTIC POLICE FORCE COMPOSED OF EX-RATS. WHAT YOU **WON'T** KNOW IS THAT I'M ABOUT TO PRESERVE YOUR PRIMITIVE PLANET...



The Stainless Steel Rat

Saves The World

SCRIPT:
KELVIN GOSNELL

ART:
CARLOS EZQUERRA

LETTERING:
PETER KNIGHT

COLOR:
JANET LANDAU

BASED ON THE BOOK BY HARRY HARRISON. © H. HARRISON 1972.

IT ALL STARTED ON OUR ASTEROID BASE. THE BOSS WAS READING ME THE RIOT ACT—AS USUAL!

SPECIAL AGENT? YOU'RE A CROOK, DIGRIZ! YOU EVEN STEAL FROM YOUR CORPS BUDDIES...

ME, INSKIPP? STEAL? NEVER!

AND THAT'S WHEN IT HAPPENED—

THEY DON'T CALL YOU SLIPPERY JIM FOR

INSKIPP—WHERE ARE YOU GOING? IF THIS IS A JOKE, THEN LET ME TELL YOU—

BUT I DIDN'T TELL HIM ANYTHING—HE DISAPPEARED BEFORE I HAD A CHANCE!

POF!
LEAPIN' LIZARDS! HOW DID HE DO THAT?

I WAS STILL PUZZLING OVER IT WHEN THE GASMASKED GOONS BURST IN—

'GRBBLE' MEANT GRAB.
'DIGRBBZ' MEANT ME...

GRBBLE
DIGRBBZ!

JUST TRY IT
AND I'LL GRBBLE
YOU, FROG FACE!

BLAARGLE!

NOT TOO SURE ABOUT 'BLAARGLE'—
BUT I SUSPECT IT MEANT 'OUCH'!



A 'KIGG' IN THE 'GUDD'S' FOR YOU, PAL!

OURGLE!



THEN HE PULLED THE MOST UNDERHAND TRICK I'VE EVER SEEN. HE DISAPPEARED, TOO!

AW, C'MON. I HADN'T FINISHED WITH HIM YET. WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?

POF!



I SHOULD'N'T HAVE LET HIM DISTRACT ME!

EVERYTHING WENT VERY BLACK. NEXT THING I KNEW, I'M IN THE CORPS CENTRAL SCIENCE LABS—FACE TO FACE WITH PROFESSOR COYPU, THE HEAD TECHMAN.



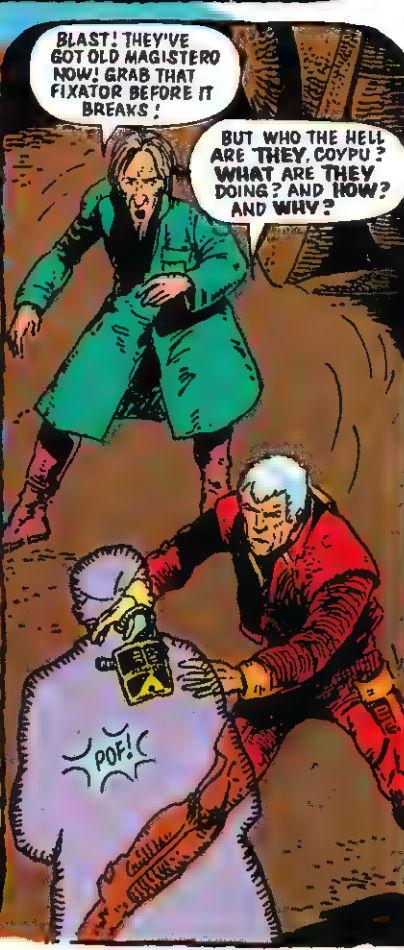
COYPU! WHAT THE HELL IS HAPPENING?

SORRY ABOUT THE VIOLENCE. DIGRIZ. HAD TO GET YOU HERE FAST. THIS LAB'S THE ONLY SAFE PLACE...



SAFE? SAFE FROM WHAT? AND WHAT IS THIS—THIS—THING ON MY BACK?

PORTABLE TIME FIXATOR. FEEDS A RECORDING OF YOUR MEMORY INTO YOUR BRAIN EVERY THREE MILLISECS. REMINDS YOU THAT YOU EXIST—EVEN WHEN YOU DON'T! GOT A BIG ONE HOOKED TO THE LAB, BUT I DON'T THINK IT'LL HOLD!



BLAST! THEY'VE GOT OLD MAGISTERO NOW! GRAB THAT FIXATOR BEFORE IT BREAKS!

BUT WHO THE HELL ARE THEY, COYPU? WHAT ARE THEY DOING? AND HOW? AND WHY?

POF!

DON'T KNOW WHO, HOW OR WHY, BUT, AS TO WHAT—IT'S A TIME WAR! THEY'RE MESSING ABOUT IN THE PAST IN ORDER TO CHANGE THE FUTURE. SINCE THE SPECIAL CORPS ARE THE BEST LAW AGENCY OF ALL TIME, THEY'VE HIT US FIRST!

WE'VE HAD TIME TRAVEL TECHNOLOGY FOR YEARS, OF COURSE—BUT WE'RE AFRAID TO USE IT OURSELVES. WE HAVE TRACED THEM, THOUGH—BACK IN THE 20TH CENTURY. WE MIGHT BE ABLE TO SEND A MAN AGAINST THEM!

THAT'S FIGHTING TALK, COYPU! I'M YOUR MAN. SOUNDS LIKE ANY SORT OF JOB!

GOT TO BE AT LEAST TREBLE OVERTIME PAY FOR THIS, PLUS BONUS!

YOU'RE A BRAVE MAN, DIGRIZ—TO TAKE THIS ONE-WAY TRIP, TO SACRIFICE YOURSELF FOR THE GOOD OF THE CORPS...FOR THE GOOD OF HUMANITY!

ONE-WAY TRIP?

GOOD OL' SLIPPERY JIM!

OF COURSE IT'S ONE-WAY. ONCE YOU GET BACK THERE, YOU CAN'T GET BACK HERE!

I WITHDRAW MY LAST STATEMENT. I LIKE IT HERE. I'M NOT REALLY INTO TIME TRAVEL, ANYWAY!

KNEW YOU'D COME THROUGH, JIMBO!

STAINLESS STEEL RAT? MORE LIKE A TINPLATE CHICKEN!

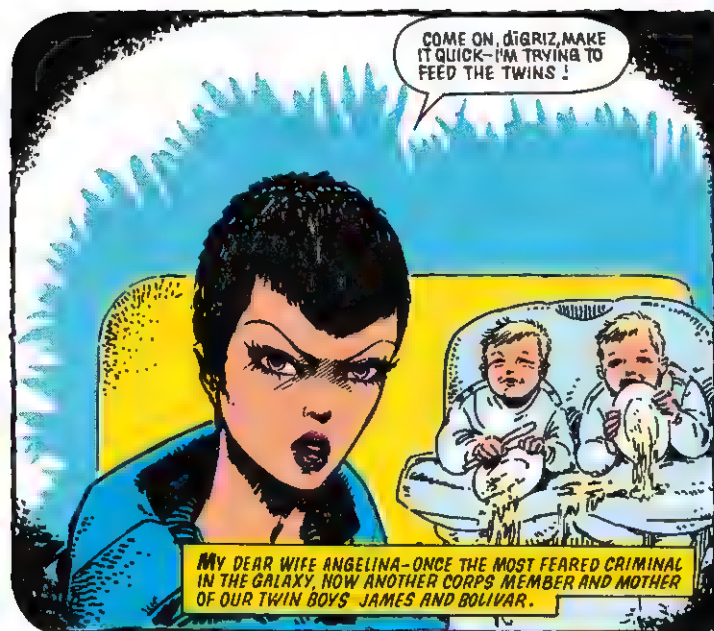
SUDDENLY SOMETHING HIT ME... IF THEY'D WIPE OUT INSKIPP AND GOD KNOWS HOW MANY OTHERS, THEY COULD HAVE GOT SOME PEOPLE VERY DEAR TO ME...

ANGELINA!

I RACED FOR THE VIDPHONE—

ANGIE! YOU'RE THERE!

OF COURSE I'M HERE, WHERE ELSE WOULD I BE? NOW, WHAT DO YOU WANT?..



COME ON, DIGRIZ, MAKE IT QUICK—I'M TRYING TO FEED THE TWINS!

MY DEAR WIFE ANGELINA—ONCE THE MOST FEARED CRIMINAL IN THE GALAXY, NOW ANOTHER CORPS MEMBER AND MOTHER OF OUR TWIN BOYS JAMES AND BOLIVAR.



OUR CALL CAME TO A VERY SUDDEN END...

ANGIE! NOOOOO!



AND THAT, FRIENDS, IS HOW I CAME TO BE WEARING A PLANETARY ASSAULT SUIT ABOUT TO BOARD THE MOST BIZARRE DEVICE I'D EVER SEEN... THE TIME HELIX.

YOUR DESTINATION IS THE YEAR 1980—A PLANET CALLED DIRT OR EARTH OR SOMETHING: THE HELIX WILL SHOOT YOU THERE—BUT THEN IT CEASES TO EXIST! YOU'LL HAVE NO WAY OF BUILDING ANOTHER...



I WILL IF I TAKE YOUR MEMORY BOX. IT HAS ALL THE DATA ON THE HELIX IN IT!

BUT—BUT IF YOU TAKE THAT, I'LL ONLY EXIST FOR A FEW MORE MINUTES!



NO BOX—NO GO!



COYPU GAVE ME THE BOX—“FOR THE GOOD OF HUMANITY,” HE SAID. BUT I WASN'T DOING IT FOR HUMANITY... SOMEONE, SOMEWHERE, SOMEWHEN HAD ERASED MY WIFE AND KIDS. I WAS GOING TO GET THAT SOMEONE—AND HARD!



I HIT THE BUTTON, AND TIME SLOWED DOWN AND STOPPED.

FORGET EVERYTHING YOU
EVER HEARD ABOUT TIME
TRAVEL-ALL THAT GUFF
ABOUT 'EVERYTHING WENT
MISTY' AND 'NOTHING
SEEMED TO HAPPEN'...

BELIEVE ME, NOTHING
GOES MISTY... AND
EVERYTHING SEEMS
TO HAPPEN-AT ONCE!

TAKE SLIPPERY
JIM DIRRIZ'
WORD FOR IT...

TIME TRAVEL
HURTS!

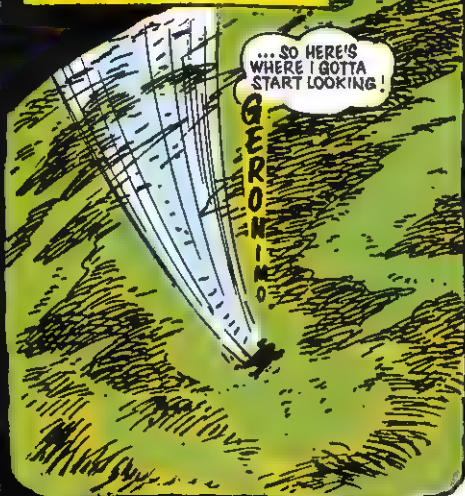
I STOPPED SCREAMING AS I POPPED OUT
OF THE TIME LINES INTO A NEAT LITTLE
ORBIT ROUND PLANET EARTH-OVER
30,000 YEARS IN MY PAST!

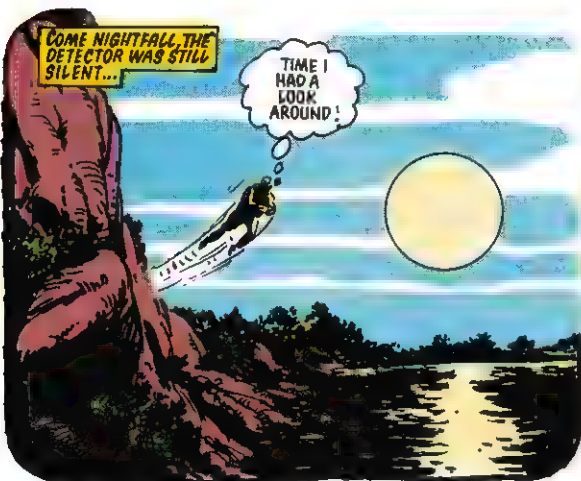
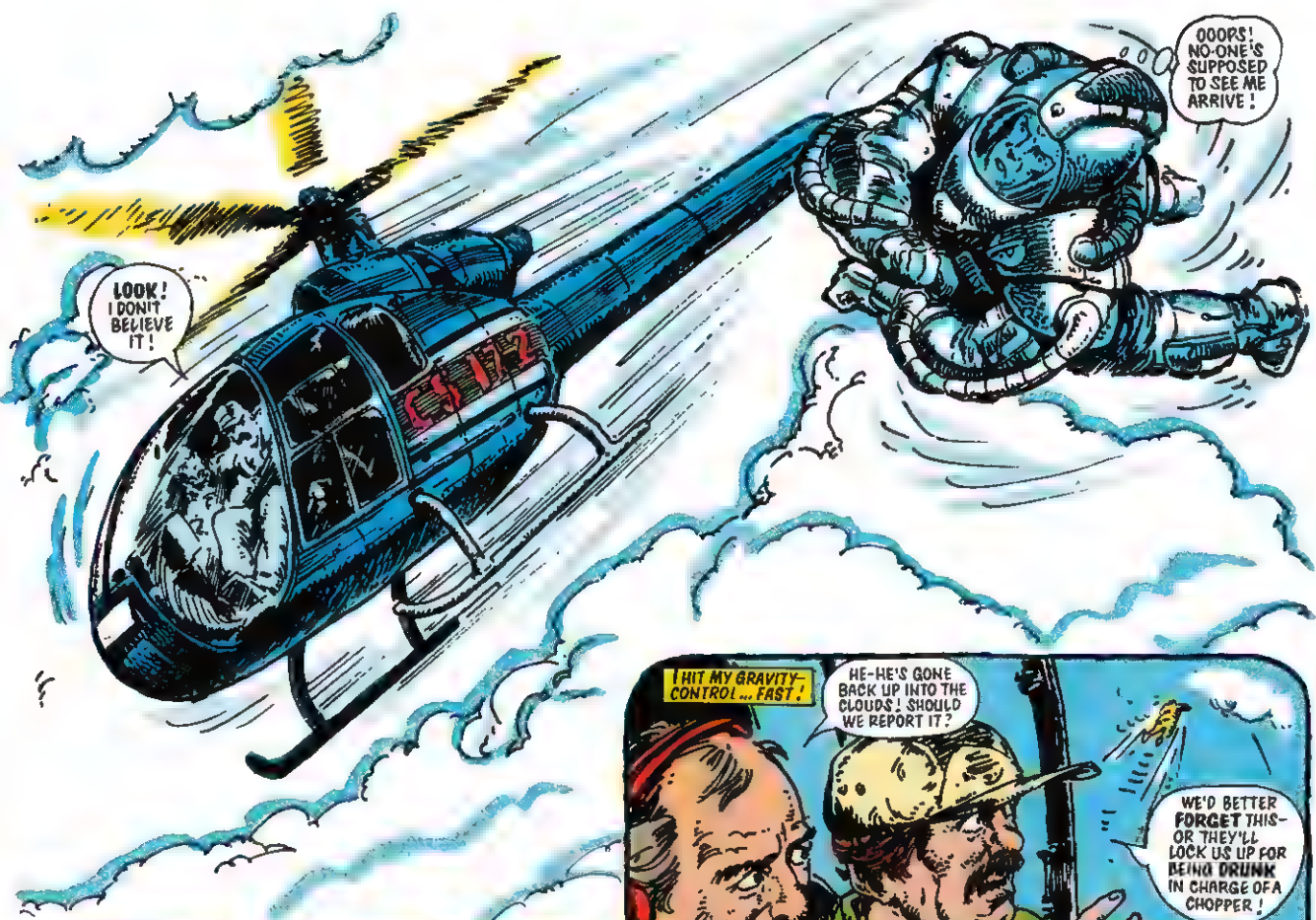
SO THAT'S IT-
THE MUDBALL
WHERE THE
TIME-KILLERS
HIDING OUT!



LOOKED A VERY DULL SORT OF
PLACE FOR A MURDERING MADMAN
TO SET UP HIS H.Q.-

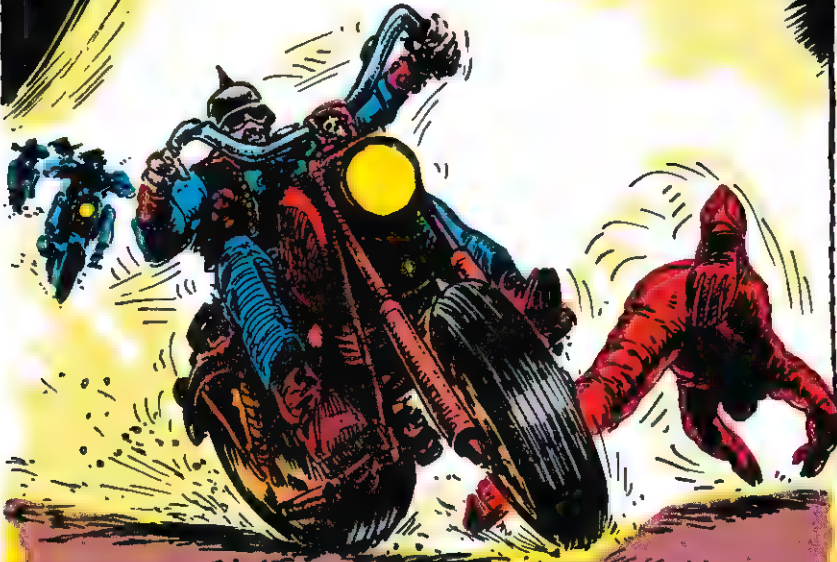
...SO HERE'S
WHERE I GOTTA
START LOOKING!





SECONDS LATER,
I FOUND OUT!

GIT OUTA DA
WAY, CREEP!



RECKON WE GOT
OURSELVES A BIT
O' FUN HERE,
BOYS!



MAN! I DAMN
NEAR COPPED A BAD
ROAD-RASH THERE!
YOU IS JUST ASKIN'
FOR TROUBLE,
MEATHEAD!

TURN OUT THE
POCKETS, SKINNY!
I FIGURE YOU
OWE US SOME
COMPENSATION...

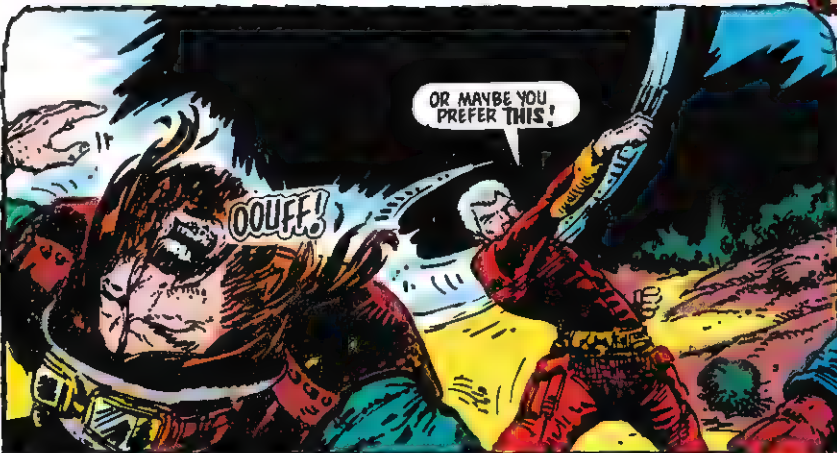
MY AUTO-LINGUA DEVICE HAD
TAUGHT ME SOME OF THE LANGUAGE
FROM THE LOCAL RADIO, BUT THIS
GUY WAS USING SOME STRANGE
DIALECT-

NOW THAT KIND OF TALK IS
LIKE WAVING A RED FLAG IN
FRONT OF A BULL!

HOW'S THIS FOR
COMPENSATION,
SPIKE-HEAD?



OR MAYBE YOU
PREFER THIS!



AS APE-MAN NUMBER ONE WENT DOWN, I TRIGGERED A FLASH GRENADE—

EVER HAD A CAMERA FLASH GUN GO OFF WHEN YOU WERE LOOKING RIGHT INTO IT? THE GRENADE'S ABOUT 100 TIMES WORSE!

AARGH!
MY EYES!

AARGH!!

THAT'LL KEEP THEM BUSY—AND THIS THUG WILL KEEP ME BUSY!

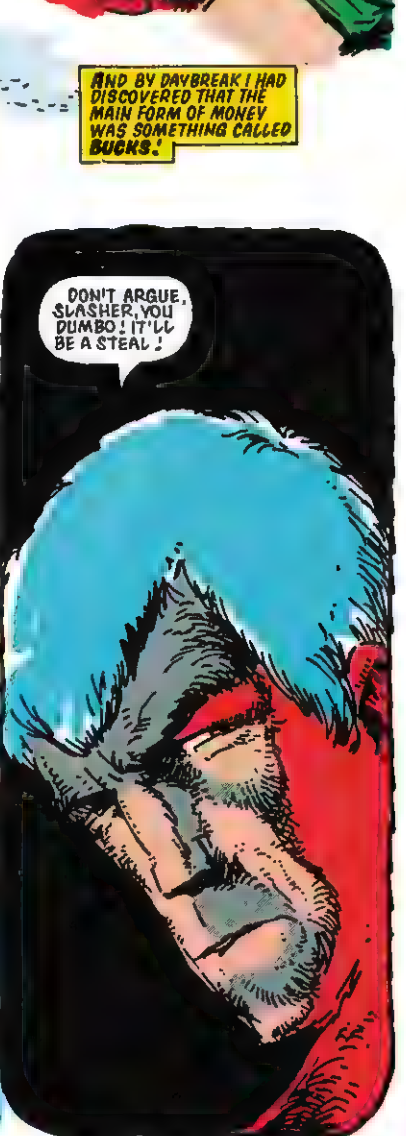
ME WAS JUST WHAT I NEEDED—A SOURCE OF INFORMATION. I HOOKED HIM UP TO THE AUTO-LINGUA AND A LIE DETECTOR...

WHAT DA BLAZES HIT ME?

I DID. ME NAME JIM. WHAT NAME YOU?

M-ME SLASHER. DON'T KILL ME! PLEASE DON'T...

JIM NOT KILL SLASHER. JIM WANT BE SLASHER'S FRIEND—



A FEW HOURS LATER
I'D SELECTED MY
TARGET...

BANK

WHAT ABOUT THE
BARS... THE
ALARMS?

I SCOFF AT
THEIR STONE-
AGE GADGETS!
BRING THE
BAGS!



NOW WE GOTTA
BUST THE WALL DOWN,
RIGHT?

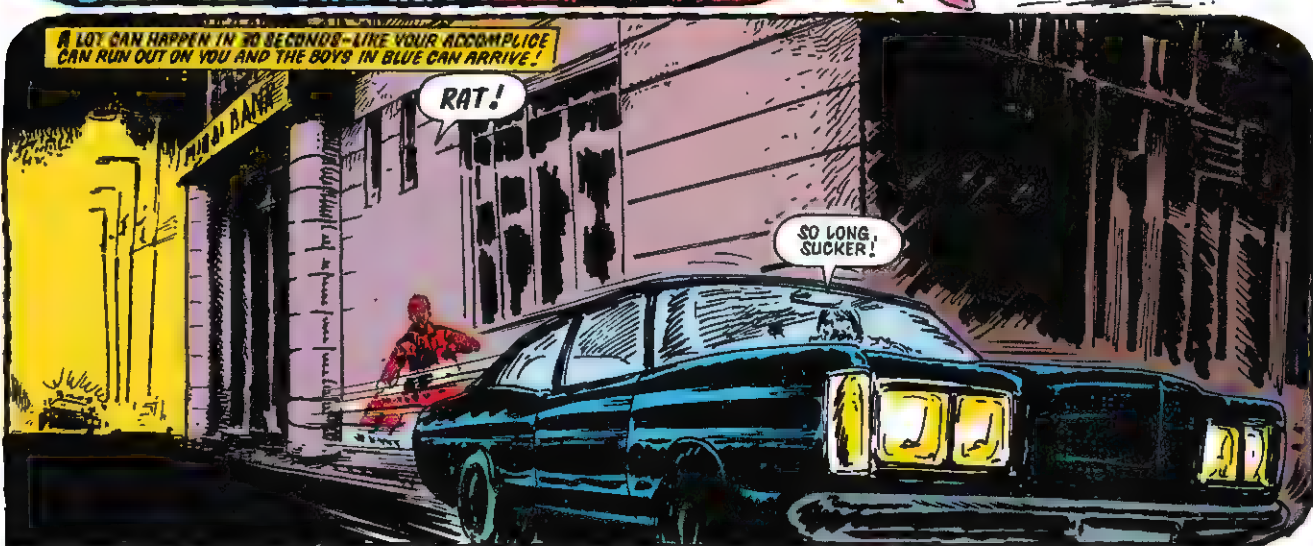
NOTHING MY
SONIC LOCK PICK
CAN'T HANDLE!

LESSON ONE—
IGNORE THE BANK!
BREAK INTO THE
STORE NEXT DOOR!

BUT IT'S
LOCKED,
JIM!

WRONG! NOW
WE USE THE PERSONAL
ECHO-SOUNDER TO
CHECK FOR ALARMS...







FREEZE, MISTER!

BLAST! THOSE TWENTIETH CENTURY FUZZ ARE FAST! MUST GET PLENTY OF PRACTICE!



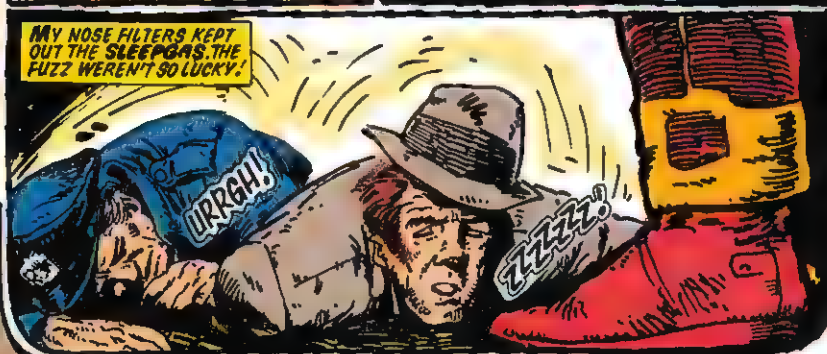
I DODGED INTO AN OPEN DOORWAY—

I GOT ABOUT THREE SECONDS... GRENADES DOWN—NOSE—PLUGS IN...



DON'T SHOOT, COPPERS. I SURRENDER. A POOR BOY LED TO CRIME BY EVIL COMPANIONS!

STOW IT, PAL. ONE MOVE AND YOU'RE HOLED! CUFF 'IM, PETE!



MY NOSE FILTERS KEPT OUT THE SLEEP GAS. THE FUZZ WEREN'T SO LUCKY!



MINUTES LATER—

WHAT HAPPENED?

IS IT A BANK HEIST?

MAKE WAY THERE, CITIZENS. SHOW'S OVER. CLEAR A PATH TO MY CAR!

ANYONE SHOT?



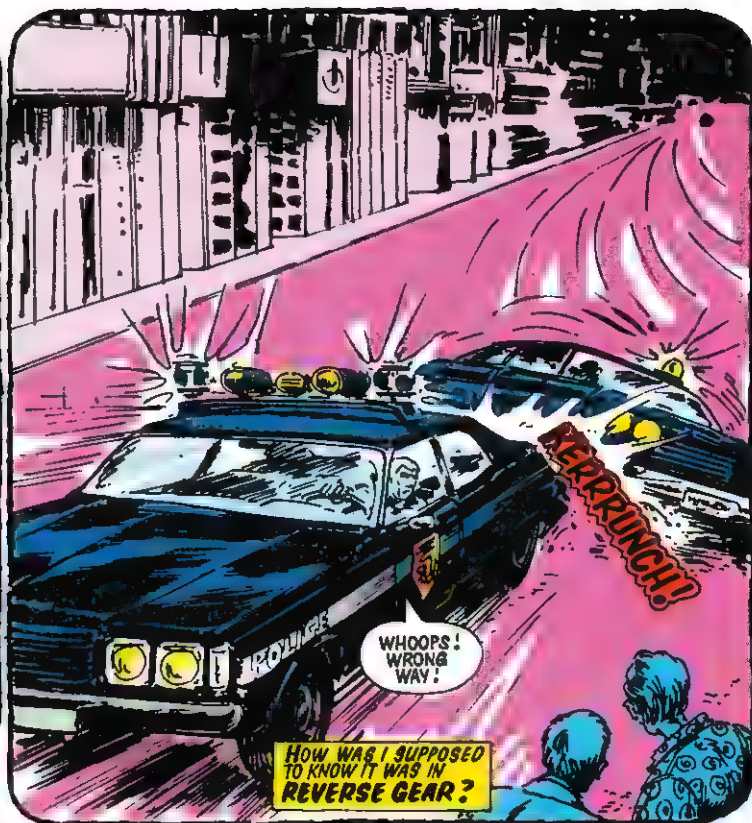
IS THERE A BODY?

WHERE'S THE BLOOD?

BLOODTHIRSTY LOT, THESE TWENTIETH-CENTURY TYPES! NOW HOW THE HELL DO I START THIS THING? I'VE SEEN SIMPLER SPACESHIPS!

I GOT THE CAR STARTED JUST AS ANOTHER ARRIVED.

DON'T WANT TO ROUSE THEIR SUSPICIONS. TAKE IT NICE AND EASY, JIM...

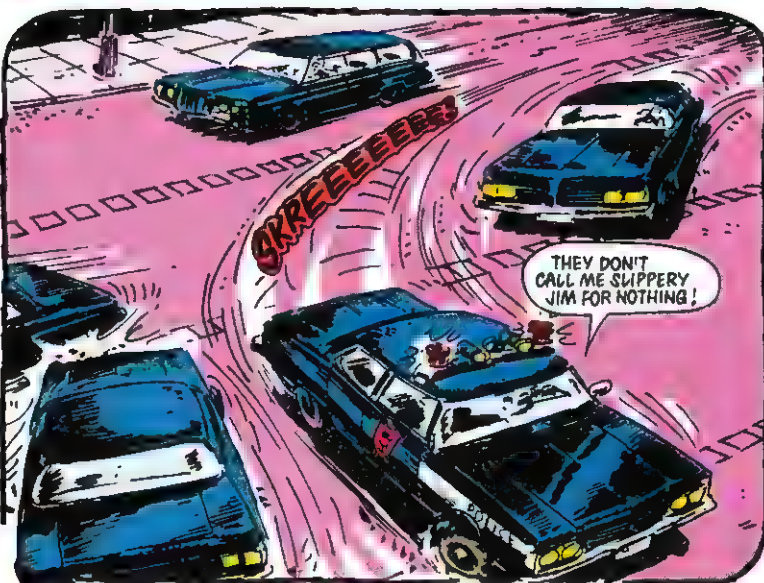
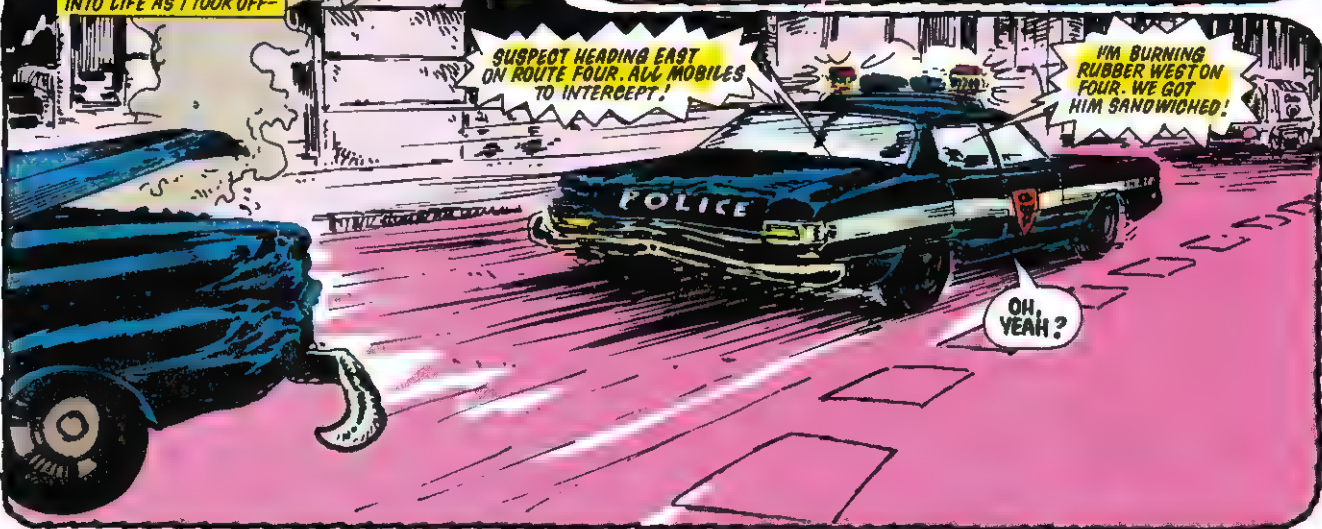


THE CAR RADIO FLARED INTO LIFE AS I TOOK OFF—

SUSPECT HEADING EAST ON ROUTE FOUR. ALL MOBILES TO INTERCEPT.

I'M BURNING RUBBER WEST ON FOUR. WE GOT HIM SANDWICHED!

OH, YEAH?



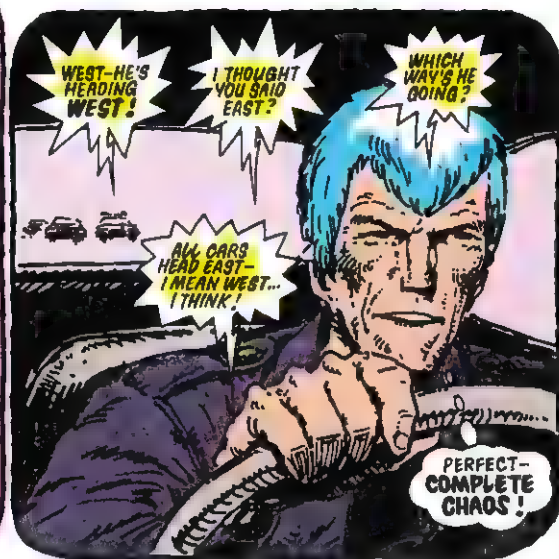
WEST—HE'S HEADING WEST!

I THOUGHT YOU SAID EAST?

WHICH WAY'S HE GOING?

ALL CARS HEAD EAST—I MEAN WEST... I THINK!

PERFECT—COMPLETE CHAOS!



A FEW MINUTES LATER A VERY LARGE NUMBER OF POLICE VEHICLES CONVERGED ON A VERY SMALL SPACE!

THERE HE IS!

WHICH ONE?

I THOUGHT THEY SAID EAST!

LOOK OUT!

WHICH GAVE ME JUST THE OPPORTUNITY I NEEDED TO PARK AND DITCH MY BORROWED GEAR.

KRUNCK!
splinter

CRASH!
SCREEEEEE

OH, DEAR. SOUNDS LIKE A ROAD ACCIDENT!

WELL DONE, JIM. YOU HAVE SPREAD GREAT CONFUSION AMONG THE BOYS IN BLUE AND GOT THE LOOT YOU NEED TO HUNT DOWN THE TIME CRIMINALS. ALL YOU GOTTA DO NOW IS FIND 'EM!

BEEBAYBEEBAYBEEBAY!

TURN THAT SIREN OFF! MY HEAD HURTS!

LOOK WHAT YOU DONE TO MY CAR!

LOOK WHAT I DONE? WHASSAMATTER WITH YOU, BABY?

BUT I THOUGHT SOMEONE SAID EAST?

THE FIRST THING I DID BACK AT MY CAVE HIDEOUT WAS CHECK THE TIME ENERGY DETECTOR...

IT'S POSITIVE! HE IS HERE! JUST HAVE TO TRANSLATE THESE READINGS—AND THE HUNT IS ON!

THE NEXT STOP WAS A NEW YORK HOTEL ROOM...

NOT A BAD TOWN, I GUESS. BE BETTER IF THEY FOUND A WAY OF KEEPING IT CLEAN, THOUGH! GET IN SOME ATOMICS INSTEAD OF BURNING ALL THEIR OIL...

STILL, THAT'S THEIR PROBLEM. ALL I GOT TO DO IS SAVE THEIR MUDDBALL OF A PLANET FOR THEM!

AND TO DO THAT I HAVE TO KILL--IN COLD BLOOD AND WITHOUT MERCY!

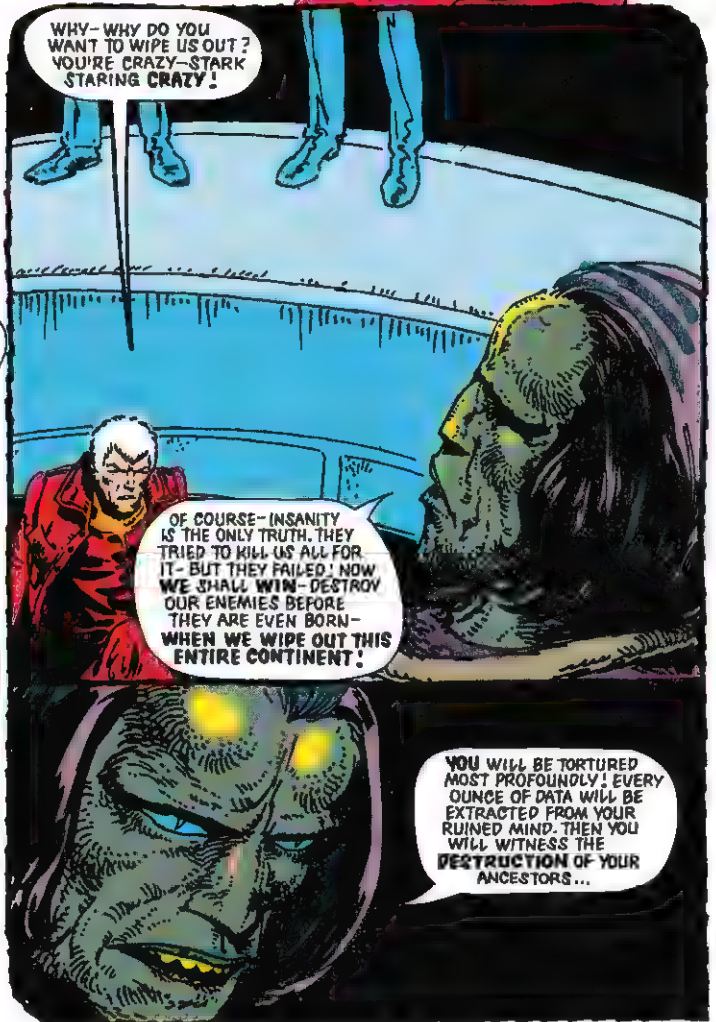
I'D NEVER DONE THAT BEFORE--AND I DIDN'T RELISH THE IDEA OF STARTING NOW!

L.P.C.
(AMERICA)

MY TIME ENERGY DETECTOR SAYS THIS IS HE'S H.Q. AT LEAST HE WON'T BE EXPECTING ME...



WHEN I CAME TO
I WISHED I'D STILL
BEEN UNCONSCIOUS!



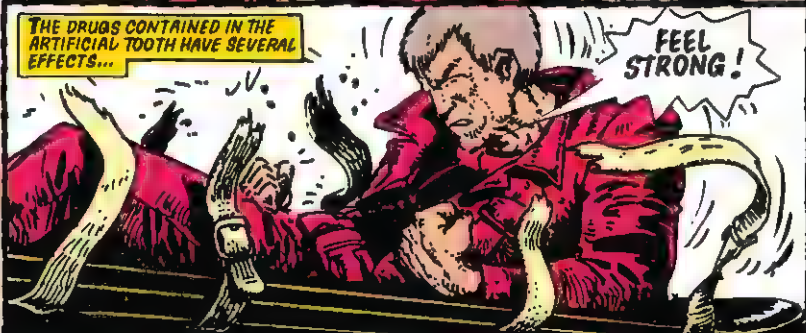


I'M SURE YOU RECOGNISE THE TIME HELIX! THE OTHER DEVICE IS A THERMO-NUCLEAR WEAPON OF TWO BILLION MEGATONS POWER-ENOUGH TO PUT THIS 'AMERICA' INTO ORBIT. AND IT WILL-IT WILL!



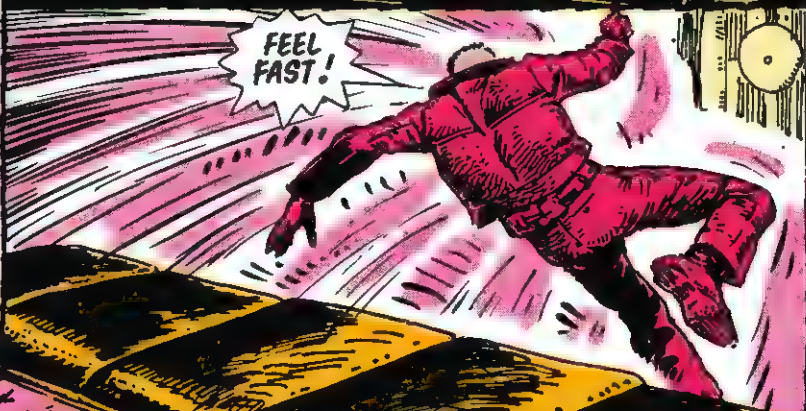
THEY STRAPPED ME DOWN- AND I TOOK THE ONLY ACTION LEFT OPEN TO ME...

ONLY ONE CHANCE-IT'S GOTTA BE THE BERSERKER-TOOTH!



THE DRUGS CONTAINED IN THE ARTIFICIAL TOOTH HAVE SEVERAL EFFECTS...

FEEL STRONG!



FEEL FAST!



FEEL... ANGRY!

HE! I WANT YOU!

GOD KNOWS WHAT THEY MADE STRENGTH INDUCING DRUGS FROM. BUT NOW I UNDERSTOOD WHY THEY WERE ILLEGAL THROUGHOUT THE GALAXY!

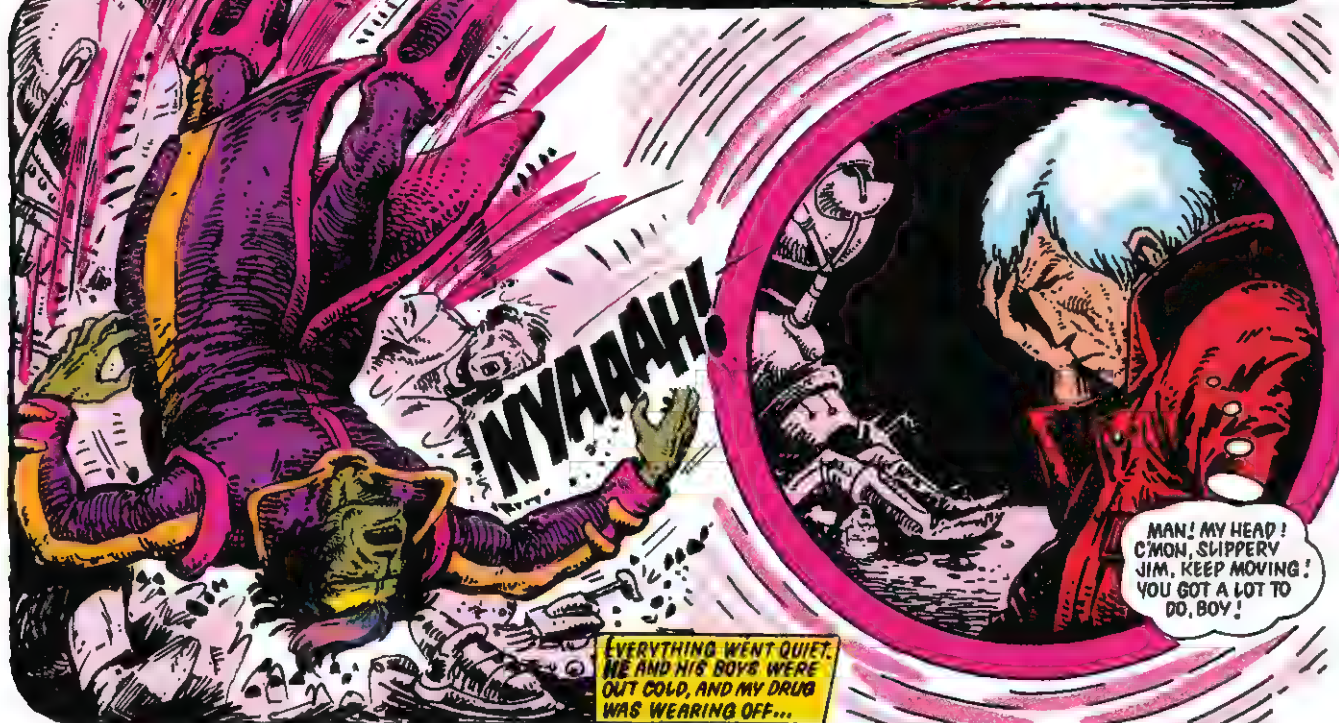


IT APPEARED THAT HE
ALSO WANTED ME!
SOMETHING HAD TO
GIVE...

...IT WASN'T
GOING TO BE ME!



HAAAARGH!



NYAAAH!

EVERYTHING WENT QUIET.
HE AND HIS BOYS WERE
OUT COLD, AND MY DRUG
WAS WEARING OFF...

MAN! MY HEAD!
C'MON, SLIPPERY
JIM, KEEP MOVING!
YOU GOT A LOT TO
DO, BOY!

IT DIDN'T TAKE ME TOO LONG. FIRST I SEEDED THE AIR-CONDITIONING WITH SLEEPGAS TO KNOCK OUT THE WHOLE BUILDING. THEN I IMMOBILISED HE'S UNPLEASANT CONTINENT-DESTROYING BOMB. BUT AT LAST-

I DIDN'T GET THE CHANCE!

YOU CAN'T HIDE FROM IT, JIM. YOU'VE GOT TO USE THIS ON HE-KILL HIM IN COLD BLOOD!

OUT OF MY WAY, SCUM!

THE GAS SHOULD HAVE PUT HIM OUT FOR HOURS. I KNEW I WAS DEALING WITH SOMETHING MORE THAN HUMAN.

BUT AN EXPLOSIVE SLUG DOESN'T MAKE A DISTINCTION. HUMAN OR NOT-IT KILLS!

DIE, DAMN YOU!

GONE! BUT HE'LL BE DEAD WHERE-OR WHENEVER HE ARRIVES. HE'S GOT TO BE!

NOW I KNEW WHAT IT FELT LIKE TO SAVE THE WORLD. AFTER AN ANONYMOUS CALL TO THE POLICE, I RELAXED AS THEY MOPPED UP THE REST OF HE'S BOYS. I KNEW THAT BY DISARMING THAT BOMB, MY FUTURE HAD COME BACK INTO EXISTENCE...

TRouble is, I'VE ONLY GOT ONE CHANCE OF GETTING HOME...

AND THAT WAS TO GET MONEY - LOTS OF MONEY! THE U.S. NAVY WAS GOING TO HELP ME...

GOOD MORNING, CHIEF. IS IT TRUE THAT YOU HAVE OVER A **MILLION DOLLARS** IN HERE ON PAYDAYS?

YEAH, THAT'S RIGHT, SIR. **MILLION BUCKS**- A GREAT RESPONSIBILITY...

WELL, I'M HERE TO **RELIEVE** YOU OF YOUR AWESOME BURDEN, CHIEF! NIGHTY-NIGHT!

WHAAAAA?

IT'S SLEEPY-TIME, BOYS. SWEET DREAMS!

AH, THE RUSTLE OF GREENBACKS- MUSIC TO MY EARS!

MY ANAESTHETIC DARTS LEFT ONLY A PINPRICK, AND I'D FORMULATED THE FLUID MYSELF. IT GUARANTEED HALF AN HOUR'S DREAMLESS SLEEP-AND NO HANGOVER!

THE NEXT SOUND
HOWEVER, WAS
VERY MUCH NOT
MUSIC...

THEY WERE LIKE EVERYONE ELSE IN THIS LOONY
20th CENTURY: CRAZY AND TRIGGER-HAPPY!
BUT THEY WERE DEALING WITH A STAINLESS
STEEL RAT—

WE KNOW
YOU'RE IN THERE!
SURRENDER
OR WE GUN
YOU DOWN!

?

TIME FOR PLAN "B"!
FIRST, A FEW
SMOKE-BOMBS...

DON'T SHOOT! I'M
HIS HOSTAGE!
HE'S RIGHT BEHIND
ME!

I THREW MYSELF TO
THE GROUND—

OKAY, YOU
GUYS—OPEN
UP! AND AIM
HIGH!

HOLD YOUR FIRE!
LET THE HOSTAGE
GET CLEAR!

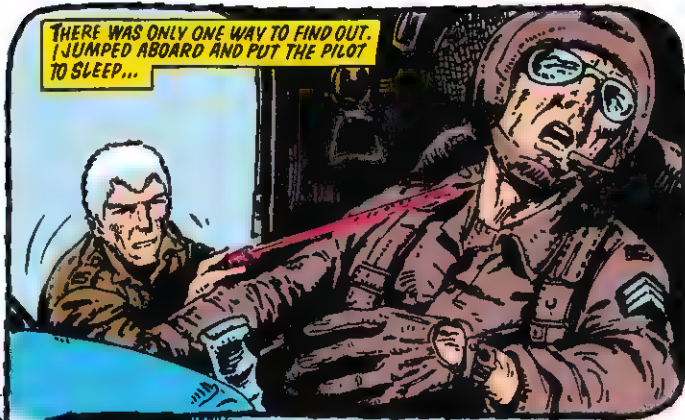
SMASH!

RAT-A-TAT-A-TAT-A!

CRAZY! ALL
COMPLETELY
BANANAS!



IT'LL TAKE THEM ABOUT TEN SECONDS TO REALISE THEIR MISTAKE. I GOTTA GET OUT OF HERE-FAST! WONDER IF I CAN FLY ONE OF THESE ...



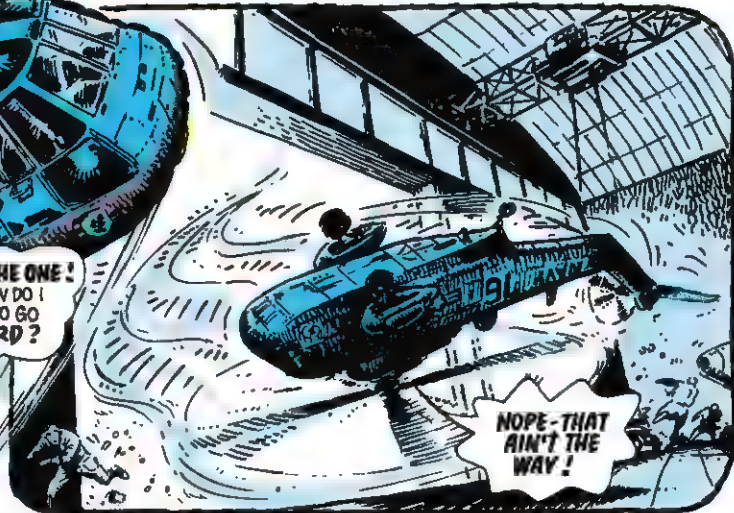
THERE WAS ONLY ONE WAY TO FIND OUT. I JUMPED ABOARD AND PUT THE PILOT TO SLEEP...



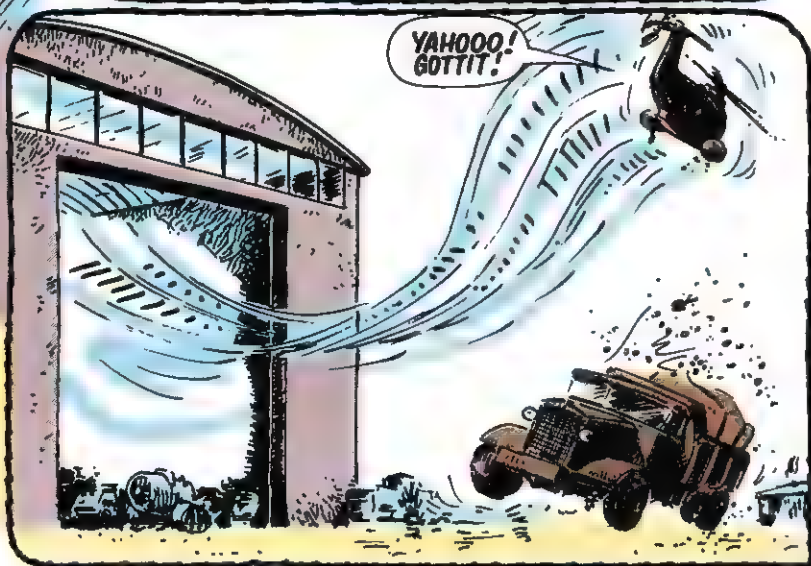
COME ON! ONE OF THESE SWITCHES MUST MAKE THIS THING GO UP!



THAT'S THE ONE! NOW-HOW DO I GET HER TO GO FORWARD?



NOPE-THAT AIN'T THE WAY!



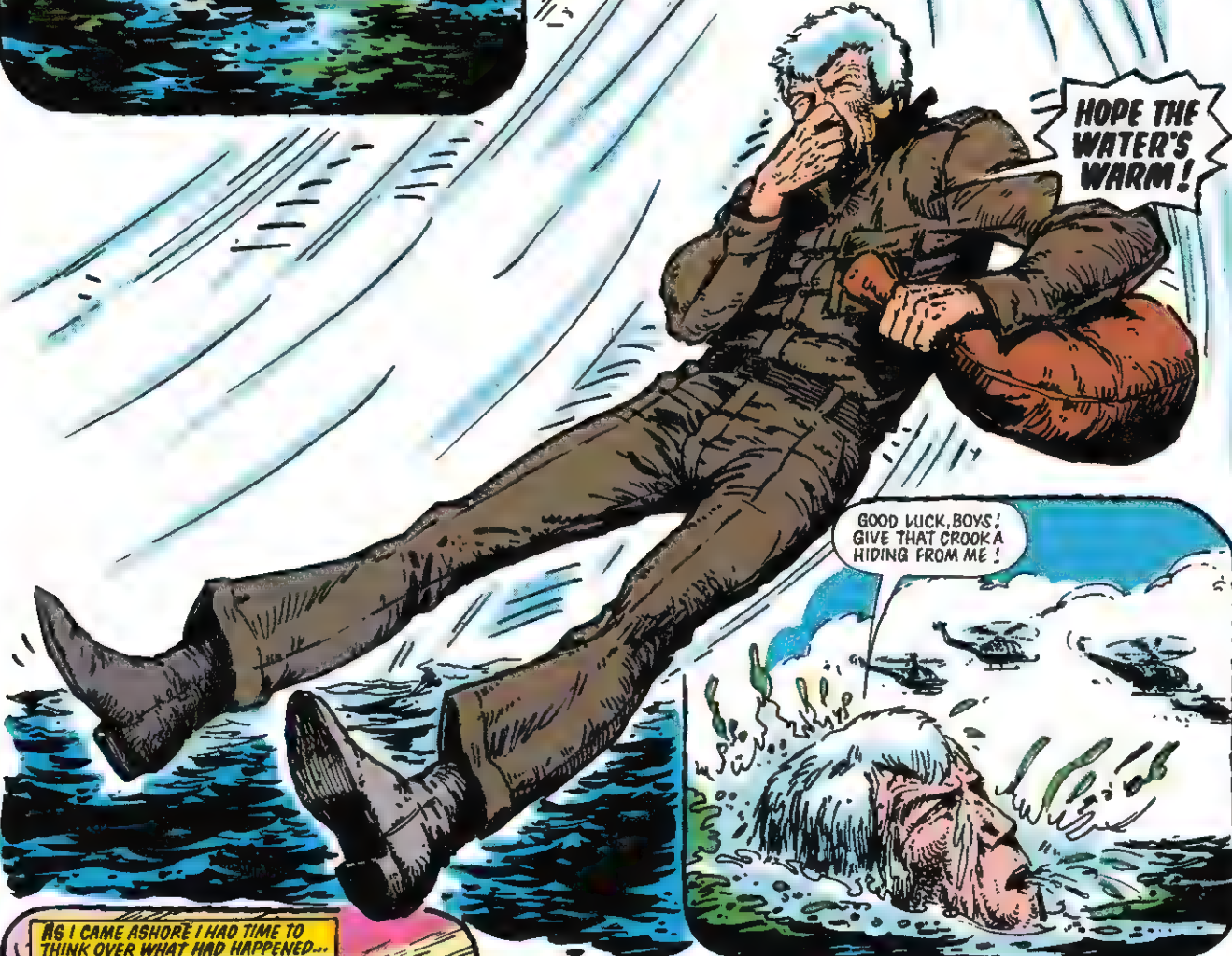
YAHOOO! GOT IT!



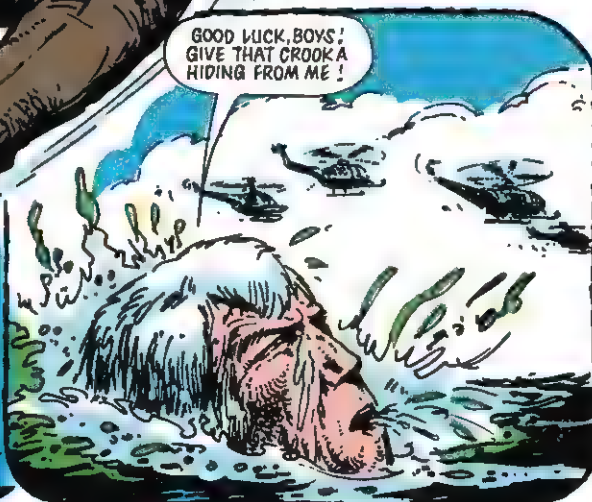
AAA! THE NAVY'S
WAKENED UP AT LAST!
STILL, BY THE TIME
THEY CATCH UP...



I'LL BE LONG
GONE! AUTO-
PILOT ON!



HOPE THE
WATER'S
WARM!




GOOD LUCK, BOYS!
GIVE THAT CROOK A
HIDING FROM ME!



AS I CAME ASHORE I HAD TIME TO
THINK OVER WHAT HAD HAPPENED...

THOSE BOYS KNEW
I WAS COMING. I WALKED
INTO A TRAP. IT CAN ONLY
MEAN ONE THING...



"... THAT THE CREATURE
CALLED ME IS STILL ALIVE
SOMEWHERE- AND SOMEWHEN-
AND HE WARNED THEM TO SET
THE TRAP! WHICH MAKES
WHAT I AND THIS MONEY HERE
HAVE TO DO ALL THE MORE
URGENT!

IT TOOK ME A MONTH TO GET THE SET-UP I NEEDED. FIRST I STARTED UP THE FRONT COMPANY AND SETTLED DOWN TO THE LIFE OF A RESPECTABLE BUSINESSMAN...



AND THEN, WHEN I'D TAPED A RUNDOWN OF EVENTS, I TOOK PROFESSOR COYPU'S **BRAIN-IN-A-BOX**-RECORDING OF HIS PERSONALITY PROFILE...



WELL, PROF. NOW YOU KNOW AS MUCH AS I DO! I HOPE THIS IS GONNA WORK!

HERE WE GO, PROF. ONLY YOU CAN BUILD A TIME HELIX TO GET ME BACK TO THE FUTURE. I DON'T LIKE THE IDEA OF YOU TAKING OVER MY BODY ONE BIT, BUT IT'S THE ONLY WAY!



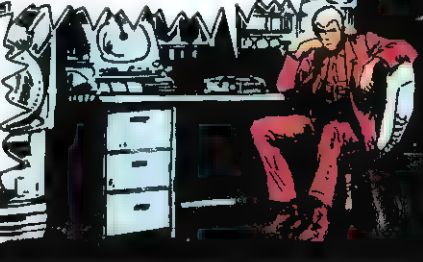
I DON'T KNOW HOW LONG IT TOOK. I DO KNOW THAT I DIDN'T LIKE **NOT EXISTING!** BUT AT LAST, COYPU HANDED CONTROL OF MY BODY BACK TO ME. SURE ENOUGH, A TIME HELIX NOW STOOD IN THE ROOM. BUT WHEN I LISTENED TO COYPU'S MESSAGE ON THE RECORDER...



OH, IT'S YOU, **diGRIZ**. WHY DON'T YOU GO AWAY? HERE - I'LL HELP YOU!

SO I REGRET THAT YOU CANNOT RETURN TO THE FUTURE YET, **diGRIZ**! YOU MAY HAVE SAVED THE WORLD ONCE - BUT YOU MUST USE THE HELIX TO GO BACK FURTHER AND SAVE IT AGAIN! **GOOD LUCK!**

BUILDING THE HELIX WAS THE EASY PART. FINDING THE CREATURE CALLED HE WAS MUCH HARDER. I HAVE TRACKED HIM BACK TO THE YEARS 1805 TO 1807. HE HAS SET UP HQ IN A TOWN CALLED **LONDON...**



AND THAT WAS HOW I GOT
HERE. I THOUGHT I'D CHECK
INTO AN INN BEFORE I BEGAN
MY SEARCH...

I'D TIME-TRIPPED DOWN FROM THE
20th CENTURY TO NAIL THIS CRAZY
HE - AND FOR A MOMENT I ALMOST
THOUGHT THAT HE'D NAILED ME FIRST...

WHAT THE--?

TIME TRAVEL'S BAD
FOR YOUR NERVES, JIM!
I THOUGHT THAT WAS A
TANK! COURSE IT
COULDN'T BE - NOT IN
19th CENTURY LONDON...

CLINKA
CLINKA
CLINKA

DAMN FRENCHIES!
AAAGH!

?!?

CLINKA

CLUNKA

CLUNKA

EITHER THE TIME TRIP HAD UNHINGED MY MIND - OR
HE WAS IN THE CITY... TOGETHER WITH A LOAD OF
OTHER THINGS THAT HAD NO RIGHT TO BE IN THE 19th
CENTURY! ONLY ONE THING WAS CERTAIN...

GOT TO FIND
SOMEWHERE
ELSE TO STAY -
THE INN'S JUST
SO MUCH
RUBBLE NOW!

I FOUND ANOTHER INN, AND WHEN DAWN CRACKED OVER THE CITY, I REALISED THAT SOMETHING WAS TERRIBLY, TERRIBLY **WRONG!**

BEFORE I LEFT THE 20th CENTURY, I'D READ UP ON THE PERIOD AND I THOUGHT I KNEW WHAT TO EXPECT...

IT DID **NOT** INCLUDE A PLASTI-STEEL WALL AROUND ST PAUL'S...OR TANKS...OR VERTICAL-TAKE-OFF JETS LANDING NEAR THE THAMES!

THE CREATURE HE HAD BEEN AT WORK. THE HISTORY BOOKS TOLD ME THAT THE BRITISH SHOULD HAVE JUST WON A GREAT SEA BATTLE AT TRAFALGAR AGAINST THEIR FRENCH ENEMIES. BUT HE HAD CHANGED THE COURSE OF HISTORY! HE'D IMPORTED SOME 20th CENTURY HARDWARE AND ENABLED THE FRENCH TO WIN THE BATTLE—AND TAKE ENGLAND!





ST PAUL'S MUST BE HE'S H.Q. ALL I NEED IS SOME EVIDENCE THAT HE'S THERE IN PERSON, AND I CAN STRIKE...



I DIDN'T HAVE TO LOOK TOO FAR. HE WAS DISMOUNTING FROM A JET. IT WAS A DAMN SIGHT QUICKER FOR CROSS-CHANNEL TRIPS THAN A SAILING SHIP!



THERE WAS ALSO A BUNCH OF THE SAME INSANE MANIACS I'D COME UP AGAINST IN THE FUTURE. I WAS GOING TO HAVE MY WORK CUT OUT!



OKAY, HE, GOD KNOWS HOW YOU SURVIVED MY SLUG-UP IN THE 20th CENTURY—BUT NOW I'VE FOUND YOU, I'M GONNA GET YOU!



SO, LATER IN THE DAY...

QU'EST-CE QUE C'EST ?

AMAZING WHAT A LITTLE GOLD CAN DO-ANYWHERE, ANY TIME...

ZUT ALORS!
D'ARGENT!

ET ENCORE!
ET ENCORE!
HO, HO, HO!

THWAAK!

THANK YOU FOR
THE 'LOAN' OF YOUR
GEAR, MON AMI.
I THINK I'M GOING
TO NEED IT!

LONDON BRIDGE SEEMED TO BE THE BEST
WAY INTO THE CITY AREA. I JOINED A LONG
LINE OF FRENCHIES TREKKING ACROSS
THE BRIDGE, BUT—

THAT RECESS IN
THE WALL—SOME
SORT OF SCREEN-
ING. BUT WHAT..?

OF COURSE! HE'S
LOOKING FOR ME—
THEY'RE EXPECTING
ME! THAT THING'S A
GEIGER COUNTER.
MY BODY'S RADIATION
COUNT WILL BE TEN
TIMES HIGHER THAN
ANYONE ELSE IN THIS
ERA. GOT TO GET OUT...
FAST!

THE ONLY WAY OUT
WAS DOWN...

SACRÉ BLEU!
JE TOMBE!

GOTTA-
FIND MY-
RESPIRATOR...

I WAS SOON GRATEFULLY TAKING
GREAT GULPING BREATHS OF
PURE OXYGEN...

HAVE TO TRY AGAIN,
SLIPPERY JIM. I'LL FLOAT
DOWNSTREAM FOR A
WHILE TO GET OUT OF
RANGE OF THE BRIDGE...

DOWNSTREAM TOOK ME TO A SINGULARLY
MUDDY PLACE CALLED WAPPING. STILL,
AT LEAST IT WAS SAFE, DRY LAND...

DID I SAY SAFE?

DON'T MOVE,
SCUM!

TO BE CONTINUED.

The Stainless Steel Rat

Saves The World Part 2



BASED ON THE BOOK BY HARRY HARRISON. © H. HARRISON 1972.

THINGS WERE MIGHTILY **WRONG** IN 1807! THE FRENCH HAD SUCCESSFULLY INVADED BRITAIN USING TANKS, JUMP-JETS AND A WHOLE BUNDLE OF THINGS THEY HAD NO RIGHT TO HAVE! IT WAS ALL DOWN TO A MAD, EVIL CREATURE CALLED HE - AND IT WAS MY JOB TO FIND AND KILL HIM, AND PUT A STOP TO THE TIME WAR HE WAS WAGING!

BUT AFTER A FAILED ATTEMPT TO PENETRATE HE'S HQ, I'D BEEN PICKED UP BY A GUY WAVING A SORT OF POCKET BLUNDERBUSS -

GOTTA TIME THIS JUST RIGHT, JIM. GRAB THE BARREL AS HE SHUTS THE DOOR...

RIGHT, BUSTER! NOW WE'RE GONNA... HUH?

BY ALL MEANS TAKE THE GUN, MY FRIEND. I NO LONGER NEED IT, ANYWAY...

WHAT GIVES, PAL? FIRST YOU WAVE THIS BLUNDERBUSS AT ME, THEN YOU COME THE OLD COMRADES BIT...

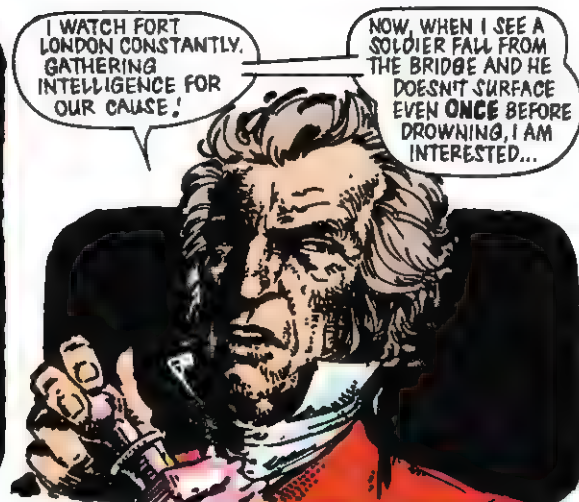
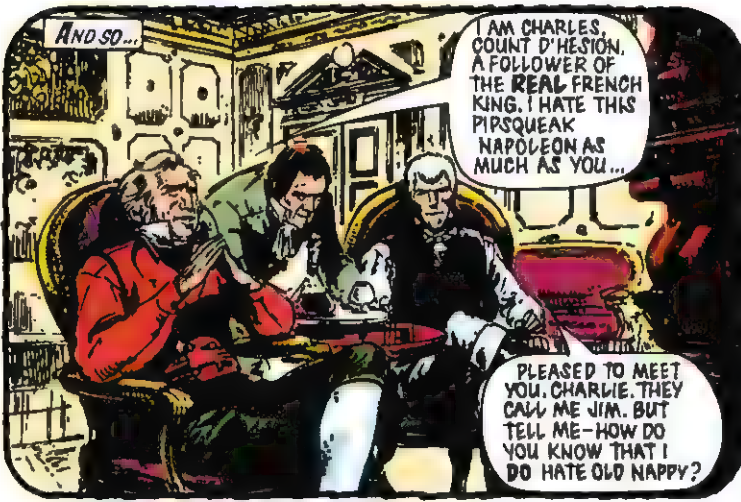
ALL WILL BE EXPLAINED - IN TIME. BUT FIRST I MUST TAKE YOU TO A SAFE PLACE FOR A CHANGE TO MORE COMFORTABLE CLOTHES...

SCRIPT
KELVIN GOSNELL

ARTIST
CARLOS EZQUERRA

LETTERING
PETE KNIGHT

COLOR
JANET LANDAU



THE MOTOR BOAT WAS MANNED BY HE'S PERSONAL GOONS. BUT I DIDN'T NEED ANY CORPS WEAPONRY—THE FEROCITY OF THE COUNT'S MEN WAS ENOUGH!

DIE, FROG!

AIEEE!

AARG!

IS THERE ANYONE HERE WHO COULD HIT THE BRIDGE WITH THIS THING?

THIS IS RENE DUPONT FORMERLY OF THE KING'S ARTILLERY. IF ANYONE CAN, IT IS RENE...

RENE WAS MOST IMPRESSED WITH THE WW2 88mm FLAK GUN...

I SEE—THE CHARGE PROJECTILE AND FUSE ALL IN ONE CASING. MOST EFFICIENT!

THE MUZZLE VELOCITY IS VERY HIGH. YOU WON'T NEED TO ALLOW FOR FALL OF SHOT!

HIT THE NORTH GATE IN 15 MINUTES. I'LL SLIP THROUGH IN THE CONFUSION!

GOOD LUCK, MY FRIEND. WE WILL ENJOY OUR TASK!

FIFTEEN MINUTES LATER, I WATCHED THE BOAT APPROACHING. NO-ONE ELSE NOTICED THE MUZZLE FLASH—

... BUT THEY SURE AS HELL NOTICED THE EXPLOSION!

RAT'S TEETH! THAT'S A BIT CLOSE, RENE!



NOW THAT'S A
DAMN SIGHT BETTER,
PAL! A FEW MORE
LIKE THAT'S ALL I
NEED!

BARRAM!



BUT—

HE'S USING THE HARRIER!
THE BOAT WON'T STAND A
CHANCE!



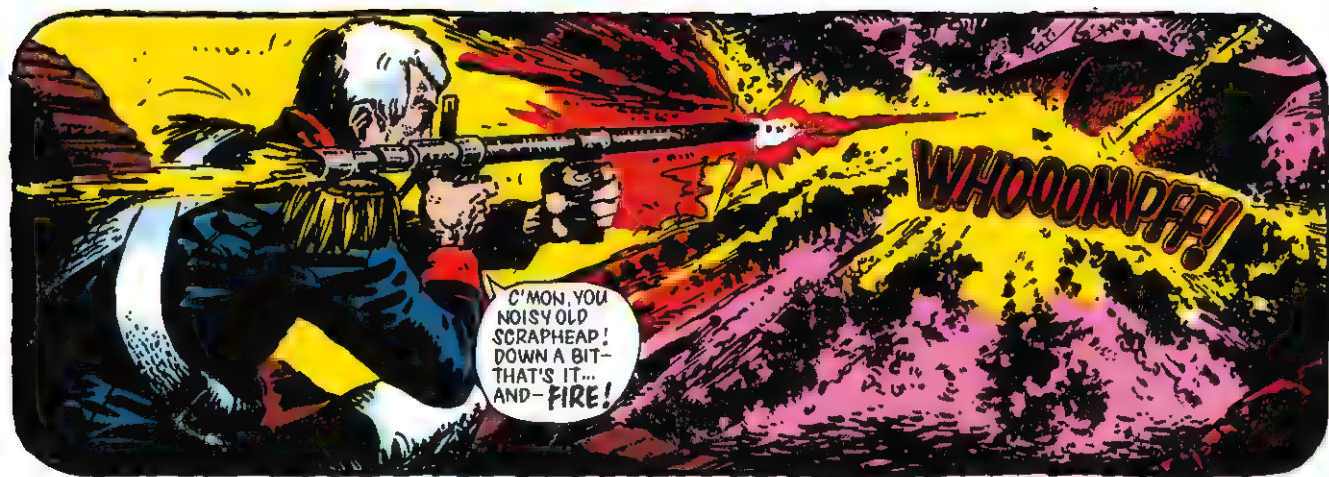
LUCKY I WAS A
SPACE SCOUT IN
MY MISSPENT
YOUTH! BE PREPARED
AND ALL THAT!

I'D WORKED ON
THE MUSKET OVERNIGHT...



IT USED TO BE A DEVICE
FOR THROWING A LEAD
BALL, RATHER INACCURATELY...

IT WAS NOW A
VERY ACCURATE
MISSILE
LAUNCHER!



C'MON, YOU
NOISY OLD
SCRAPHEAD!
DOWN A BIT—
THAT'S IT...
AND—FIRE!

WHOOOMP!!



BULLSEYE!

ARRETEZ-
VOUS!



ARRETEZ? I JUST SHOT
DOWN THE GREAT WHITE
BIRD... THE BRIDGE IS ON
FIRE... THE WORLD IS ABOUT
TO END... AND YOU WANT
ME TO ARRETEZ?



ARRETEZ
THAT,
PAL!



MINUTES LATER, I WAS
APPROACHING ST PAUL'S—
HE'S HQ.



GOOD. THEY'RE
TOO BUSY TO
NOTICE ONE
BATTERED
SOLDIER
SEEKING SHELTER...

PITY THEY DIDN'T
KNOW THAT THAT
ONE BATTERED
SOLDIER WAS A
WALKING ARSENAL
OF SPECIAL CORPS
WEAPONS... WHO WAS
ABOUT TO END THE
REIGN OF TERROR OF
THE EVIL CREATURE
CALLED HE!

HE WAS THE ONE TINKERING WITH
TIME TRAVEL. HE WAS THE ONE WHO
HAD WIPED OUT ALL MY BUDDIES AND
FAMILY IN THE FAR FUTURE. HE WAS
THE GREAT GROSS FORM SITTING ON
THE THRONE...

HE-I HAVE
COME
FOR YOU!

ME? I'M JAMES BOLIVAR
DIGRIZ, EX-COSMIC CROOK,
EX-SPECIAL CORPS GALACTIC
COP. I'M ALSO VERY ANGRY!



I NEVER HAVE BEEN A
COLD-BLOODED KILLER.
BUT THIS WAS DIFFERENT...



I'D DONE IT. KILLED IN COLD
BLOOD FOR THE FIRST TIME.
DESPITE THE EVIL I'D WIPED
OUT, IT DIDN'T FEEL GOOD...

IT'S OVER.
I'VE WON...

BUT IT WASN'T OVER...

DON'T BE FOOLISH.
YOU CANNOT WIN
AGAINST ME--
HE WHO IS BEYOND
DEATH!

WHAAAT?

YOU HAVE
LOST!

AND I HAVE WON
FOREVER! ALL
TIME IS MINE!

WHEN THE TRANK
DART WORE OFF, HE
WAS BACK AND
THE SITUATION
HAD GONE FROM
DESPERATE TO
IMPOSSIBLE.

WAKE UP, SCUM.
COME ON, I WANT
YOU CONSCIOUS TO
WITNESS MY
VICTORY AND
YOUR DEATH...

IT-IT WAS
A ROBOT, WASN'T
IT? THE THING
I SHOT...

CORRECT.
ITS ONLY
FUNCTION
WAS THE BAIT
IN THE TRAP
FOR YOU!



I GAVE NAPOLEON THE
WEAPONS TO CONQUER
THE WORLD AND, WHEN
HE SUCCEEDED, I TEMP-
ORARILY EXCHANGED
MY MIND FOR HIS TO LURE
YOU CLOSER TO YOUR
DOOM!

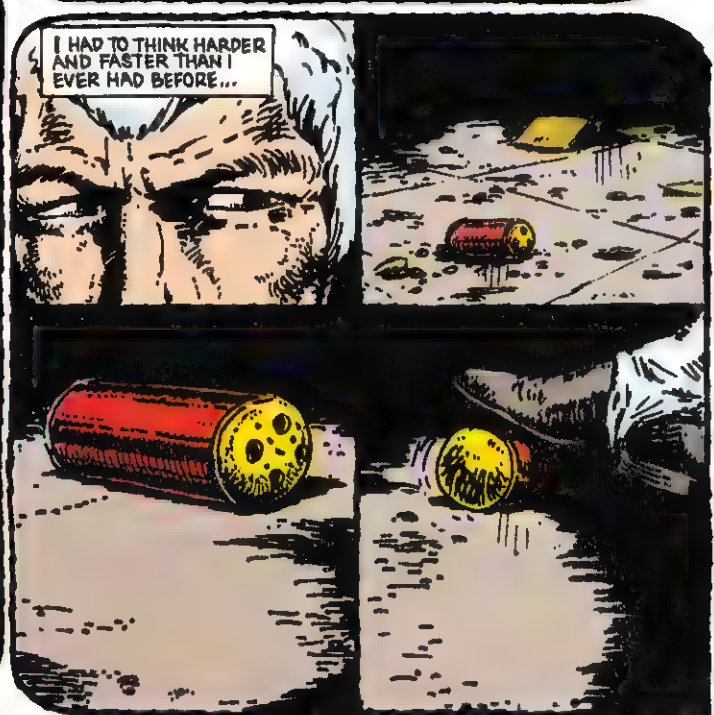
THIS WHOLE WORLD
DOES NOT EXIST IN
REAL TIME. IT IS A LOOP
IN THE TIME-STREAM
CONSTRUCTED TO BE
YOUR TOMB. AND
NOW IT SHALL SERVE
ITS PURPOSE...

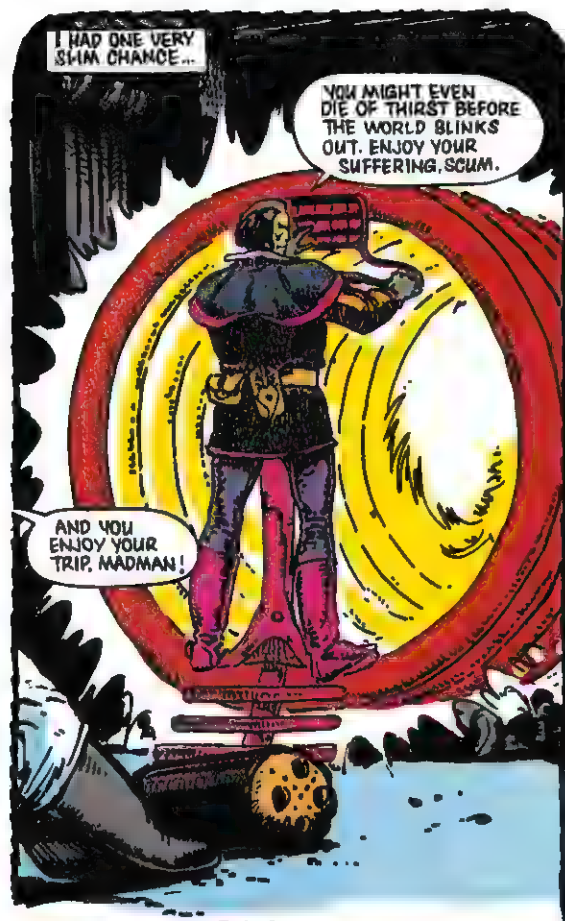


AS SOON AS I
LEAVE THE WHOLE
WORLD WILL CEASE
TO EXIST-BUT
SLOWLY. YOU WILL
HAVE TIME TO CRY
OVER YOUR FAILURE.
TIME TO SUFFER...
HORRIBLY!

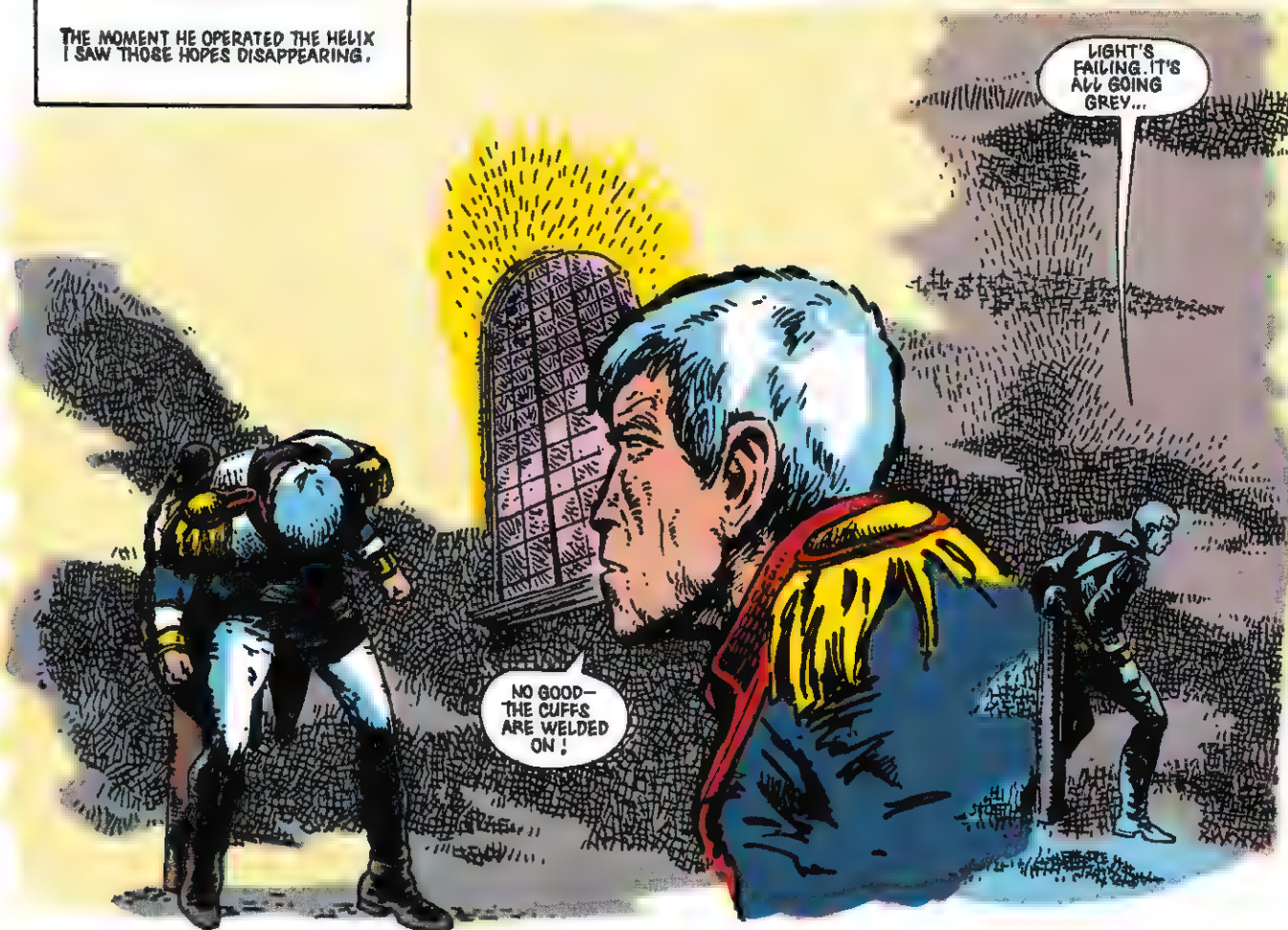



I HAD TO THINK HARDER
AND FASTER THAN I
EVER HAD BEFORE...





THE MOMENT HE OPERATED THE HELIX
I SAW THOSE HOPES DISAPPEARING.





IS THIS WHAT
THE END OF TIME
LOOKS LIKE?

I'VE LEARNT ONE THING ABOUT
TIME TRAVEL - EXPECT THE
UNEXPECTED!



YOU CAN STOP
THE DEFEATIST SNIVELLING
RIGHT NOW, SLIPPERY JIM!



ANGELINA!

BUT YOU'RE DEAD -
NEVER EXISTED -
WE LOST THE
TIME WAR SO...

PLEASE STOP YOUR
BABBLING, JAMES. YOU'RE
AS BAD AS PROFESSOR
COYPU. ALL THIS PRATTLING
ABOUT PARADOXES AND
VORTEXES JUST LEAVE
THOSE CUFFS TO ME!



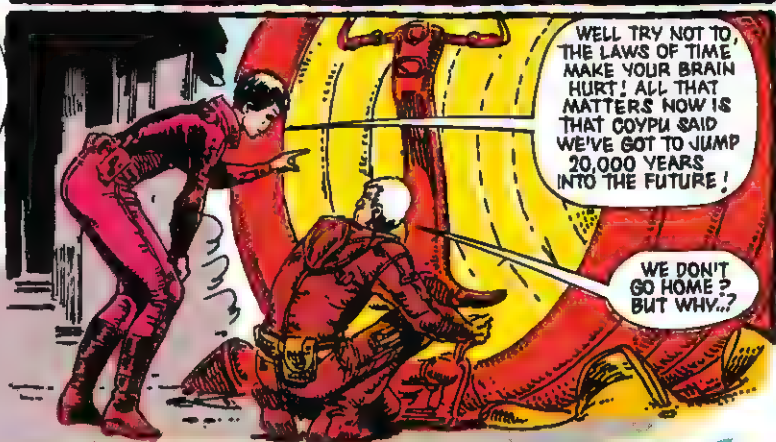
THERE, NOW DO GET RID OF THOSE RIDICULOUS CLOTHES... YOU'LL FIND SOME DECENT ONES IN THE BAG!

BUT YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND! THIS NUT-CASE HE STARTED A TIME WAR AND WIPED OUT ALL THE SPECIAL CORPS, EXCEPT ME, YOU, THE TWINS, EVERYBODY JUST WINKED OUT OF EXISTENCE!



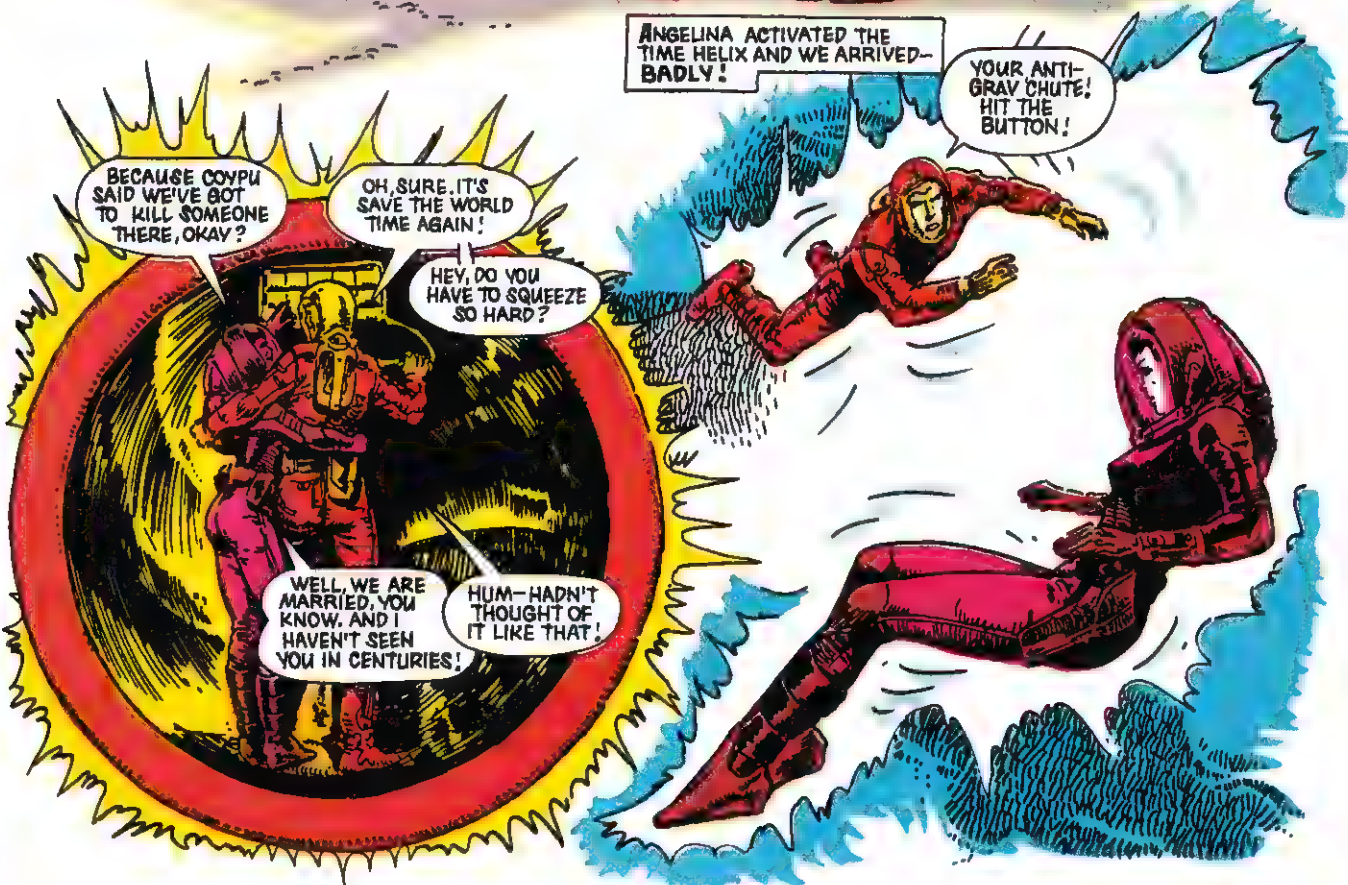
SLIPPERY JIM— YOU'VE BEEN DRINKING! YOU WERE THE ONE WHO DISAPPEARED. YOU CALLED ME ON THE VID AND WENT 'POF'. I RUSHED OVER TO THE LAB AND FOUND EVERYONE RUNNING AROUND LIKE HEADLESS CHICKENS!

THEN WE HAVEN'T LOST! IF THE FUTURE STILL EXISTS THE PAST CAN'T HAVE BEEN CHANGED... I THINK!



WE'LL TRY NOT TO LET THE LAWS OF TIME MAKE YOUR BRAIN HURT! ALL THAT MATTERS NOW IS THAT COYPU SAID WE'VE GOT TO JUMP 20,000 YEARS INTO THE FUTURE!

WE DON'T GO HOME? BUT WHY?!



ANGELINA ACTIVATED THE TIME HELIX AND WE ARRIVED— BADLY!

YOUR ANTI-GRAV CHUTE! HIT THE BUTTON!

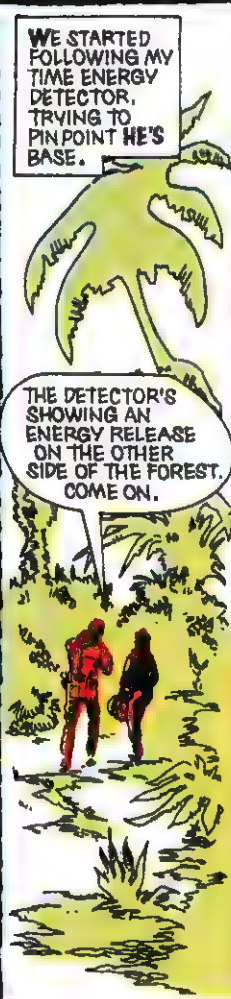
BECAUSE COYPU SAID WE'VE GOT TO KILL SOMEONE THERE, OKAY?

OH, SURE, IT'S SAVE THE WORLD TIME AGAIN!

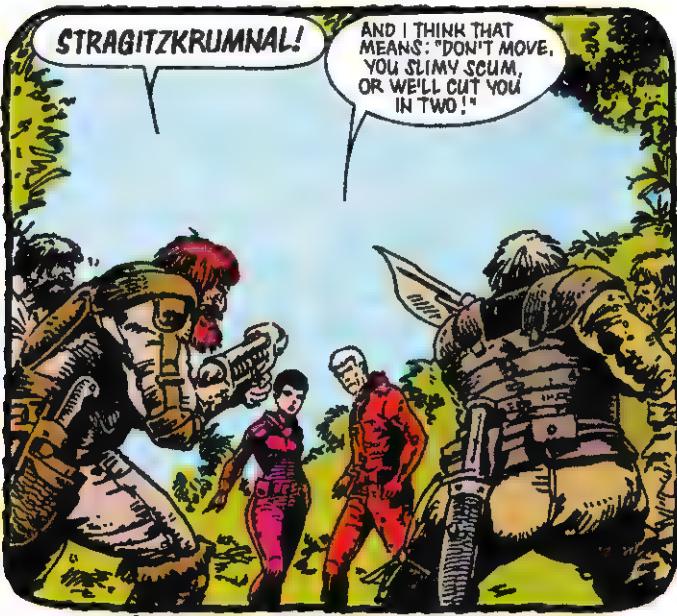
HEY, DO YOU HAVE TO SQUEEZE SO HARD?

WELL, WE ARE MARRIED, YOU KNOW. AND I HAVEN'T SEEN YOU IN CENTURIES!

HUM—HADN'T THOUGHT OF IT LIKE THAT!







WE MOVED ON UNTIL...

SO THAT'S HE'S HQ.
IT'D TAKE A MADMAN
TO BUILD THAT!

MOVE YOUR HAND
VERY SLOWLY TOWARDS
YOUR BLASTER!..

WHAT?
WHY...?

BECAUSE THERE
IS A LARGE MAN WITH
A LARGE GUN OVER
THERE AND... RATS!
HE'S SEEN US. FORGET
THE BLASTER... WE
BLUFF INSTEAD!

STAND VERY
STILL AND TELL
ME WHO YOU
ARE!

DO NOT MAKE JOKES.
MY RACE DOES NOT HAVE
A SENSE OF HUMOUR!

WE ARE SIMPLE
TRAVELLERS-TOURISTS
FROM ACROSS THE
SEA!

ACTUALLY,
WE'RE ON OUR
HONEYMOON!

IF A GUY CALLS YOUR BLUFF YOU
CAN EITHER TELL THE TRUTH OR
HIT HIM. IN THIS CASE I DECIDED
THE TRUTH WAS SAFER.

OKAY, I'M JIM.
SHE'S ANGELINA.
WE'RE TIME
TRAVELLERS!

THIS IS GOOD.
I BELIEVE YOU.
HERE-YOU'LL
WANT ONE OF
THESE-

THOUSANDS OF
THEM HAVE BEEN
FALLING FROM
THE SKY FOR DAYS
NOW!

TO THE
TIME
TRAVELLERS

AUDIO CAPSULE!
MUST BE FROM
COYPU IN OUR
HOMETIME!

BEFORE WE GOT A CHANCE TO PLAY IT, THE REST OF HAIRY'S MOB CAME OUT OF HIDING AND HE BARKED ANOTHER QUESTION.

WHAT IS YOUR CONNECTION WITH THE CREATURE IN THAT CASTLE?

WE HAVE COME TO KILL HIM AND WIPE OUT ALL THE EVIL HE HAS SOWN!

WELL THE TRUTH HAD WORKED BEFORE. ANYWAY, I COULDN'T LIE ABOUT THAT MANIAC CALLED HE...

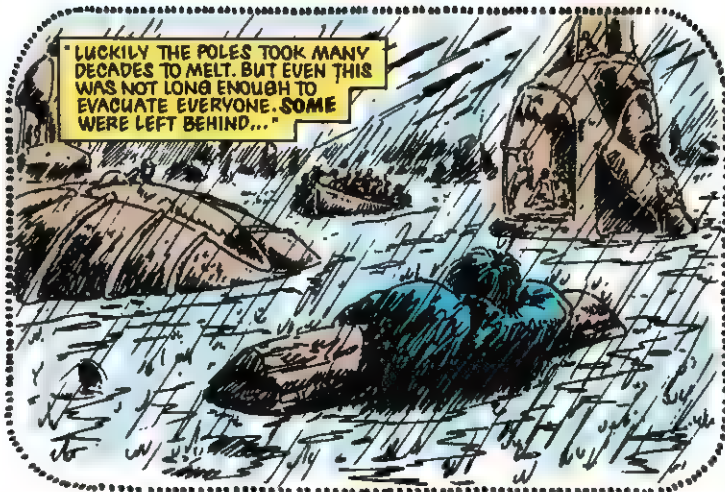
IT WORKED...

WELCOME TO THE FIGHT, JIM. I AM BIVAN AND THESE ARE THE TROOPS OF THE FIRST MARTIAN ASSAULT PLATOON!


MARTIAN? BUT WE THOUGHT THIS WAS EARTH...

"I WILL EXPLAIN. THIS IS EARTH. CENTURIES AGO, A GREAT CHANGE HIT THE CLIMATE. THE ICE CAPS MELTED, THE WATERS ROSE, IT RAINED FOR YEARS..."


"FOR THE FIRST TIME THE PEOPLE OF EARTH WERE UNITED. UNITED TO TERRA-FORM MARS AND BUILD GREAT COLONY SHIPS. IT WAS MAN'S ONLY CHANCE..."




"LUCKILY THE POLES TOOK MANY DECADES TO MELT. BUT EVEN THIS WAS NOT LONG ENOUGH TO EVACUATE EVERYONE. SOME WERE LEFT BEHIND..."



"IT WAS BAD FOR THEM. THEY FOUGHT EACH OTHER FOR SURVIVAL. ONLY THE MOST SAVAGE SURVIVED AND REACHED THIS ONE ISLAND LEFT ABOVE THE WATERS."



AND THE ONE CALLED HE IS THE WORST OF THEM ALL. HE LEADS ALL THE INSANE ONES. HE HAS DUG OUT OLD NUCLEAR MISSILES AND LAUNCHES THEM AT US. MARTIAN CITIES HAVE DIED AT HIS BIDDING..."



HE BOMBS US BECAUSE WE DO NOT AID HIM. BUT WE CANNOT, MARS IS A POOR PLANET. SO WE HAVE USED THE OLD SHIPS TO COME HERE TO EARTH AND FIGHT..."



BUT WE ARE NOT GOOD SOLDIERS. UNTIL NOW WE KNEW ONLY PEACE. THE FIGHT GOES BADLY...

DON'T WORRY, DIYAN. LET'S GET BACK TO YOUR SHIPS AND MEN, AND WE'LL PUT AN ATTACK TOGETHER!



BUT THESE ARE MY MEN, ALL OF THEM. THE REST ARE DEAD. OUR SHIPS DESTROYED! IT WILL BE TWO WEEKS BEFORE MORE ARRIVE FROM MARS!

OKAY, SO WE WAIT A COUPLE OF WEEKS. WE'LL NEED THE SHIPS' HARDWARE TO HIT THAT CASTLE!



NO WAY, JAMES. WE HIT THAT CASTLE AND WE DO IT NOW!

EIGHT GUYS AGAINST A FORTRESS LIKE THAT! AND YOU CALLED ME CRAZY?



WHILE YOU'VE BEEN CHATTING, I'VE BEEN DOING THE IMPORTANT STUFF AND LISTENING TO THE MESSAGE. CATCH IT YOURSELF...

IN 23 DAYS THE CREATURE HE WILL LEAVE EARTH FOREVER...



IN 2.8 DAYS THE PLANET EARTH WILL LEAVE THE UNIVERSE. IT WILL BE TOTALLY DESTROYED BY A SERIES OF UNSTOPPABLE THERMO-NUCLEAR EXPLOSIONS...

I KNEW I HAD TO THINK OF SOMETHING... REAL QUICK!

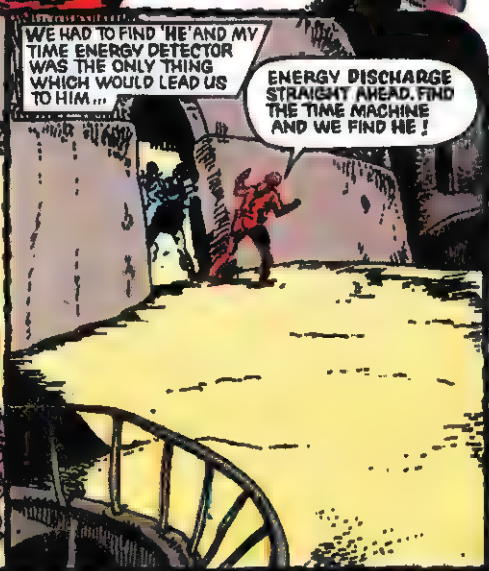
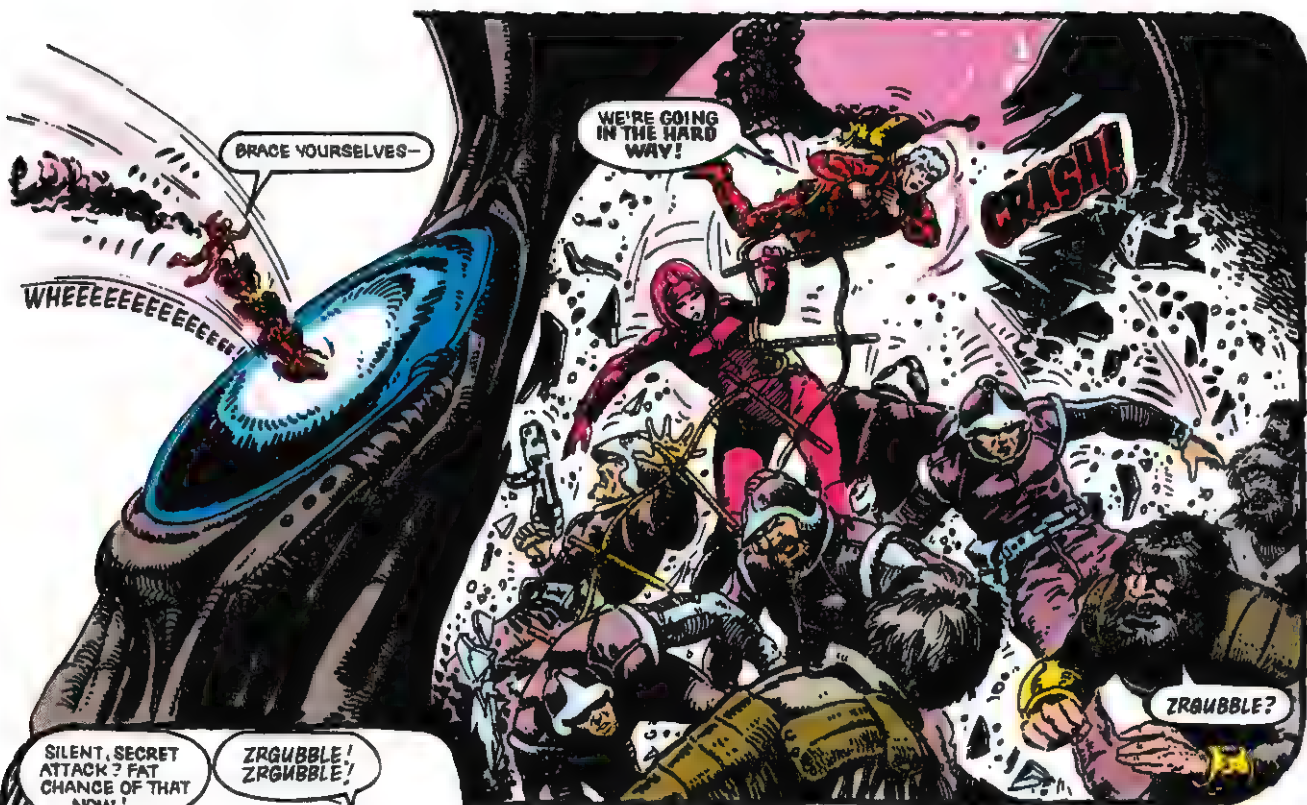
A FEW HOURS LATER I HAD A PLAN WORKED OUT. HARNESSSED TO OUR ONE GRAV 'CHUTE, WE WERE READY TO TACKLE HE'S STRONGHOLD...

AND WHAT A STRONGHOLD!

KEEP IT QUIET.
IF OUR ATTACK'S
GONNA WORK IT
HAS TO BE
SILENT AND SECRET...

BUT AS I LOOKED
FOR A LANDING
SITE...

NO! THE 'CHUTE'S
OVERHEATING!
LOSING CONTROL...



I KNEW HE WAS HERE. ONLY A MADMAN LIKE HIM COULD BUILD A PLACE AS INSANE AS THAT JOINT...

SOME OF THE STRUCTURES WE PASSED THROUGH SEEMED TO HAVE NO PURPOSE... LIKE THE ONE METRE HIGH CORRIDOR...

BUT THE LAST MARTIAN IN THE FILE DISCOVERED WHAT IT WAS FOR...

AAAARGH!

EVERYWHERE WE WENT, SOMEONE OR SOMETHING WAS TRYING TO KILL US...

THE WALLS CLOSED IN AND CRUSHED HIM! THIS IS LIKE WALKING THROUGH SOMEONE'S NIGHTMARE...

I SEE YOU, MR. SCUMBALL SNIPER...

...AND YOU'RE DEAD!

SNIPER-GET DOWN...

NICE WORK MRS. DIGRIZ. COME ON!



THE ENERGY DETECTOR LED US THROUGH A VAST HYDROPONIC GARDEN.

IT'S WEEDING TIME, GARDNER—SLEEP THIS OFF!



I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN—THE PLANTS THERE WEREN'T MEANT TO BE EATEN...

MMMM
MMMMFF!



THEY WERE MEANT TO EAT-US!

MANEATER! IT'S GOT JORED!

HE'S HAD IT, PAL—ONLY ONE WAY NOW...



BURN IT!

GOODBYE, JORED. AT LEAST THIS WAY IS QUICKER FOR YOU!

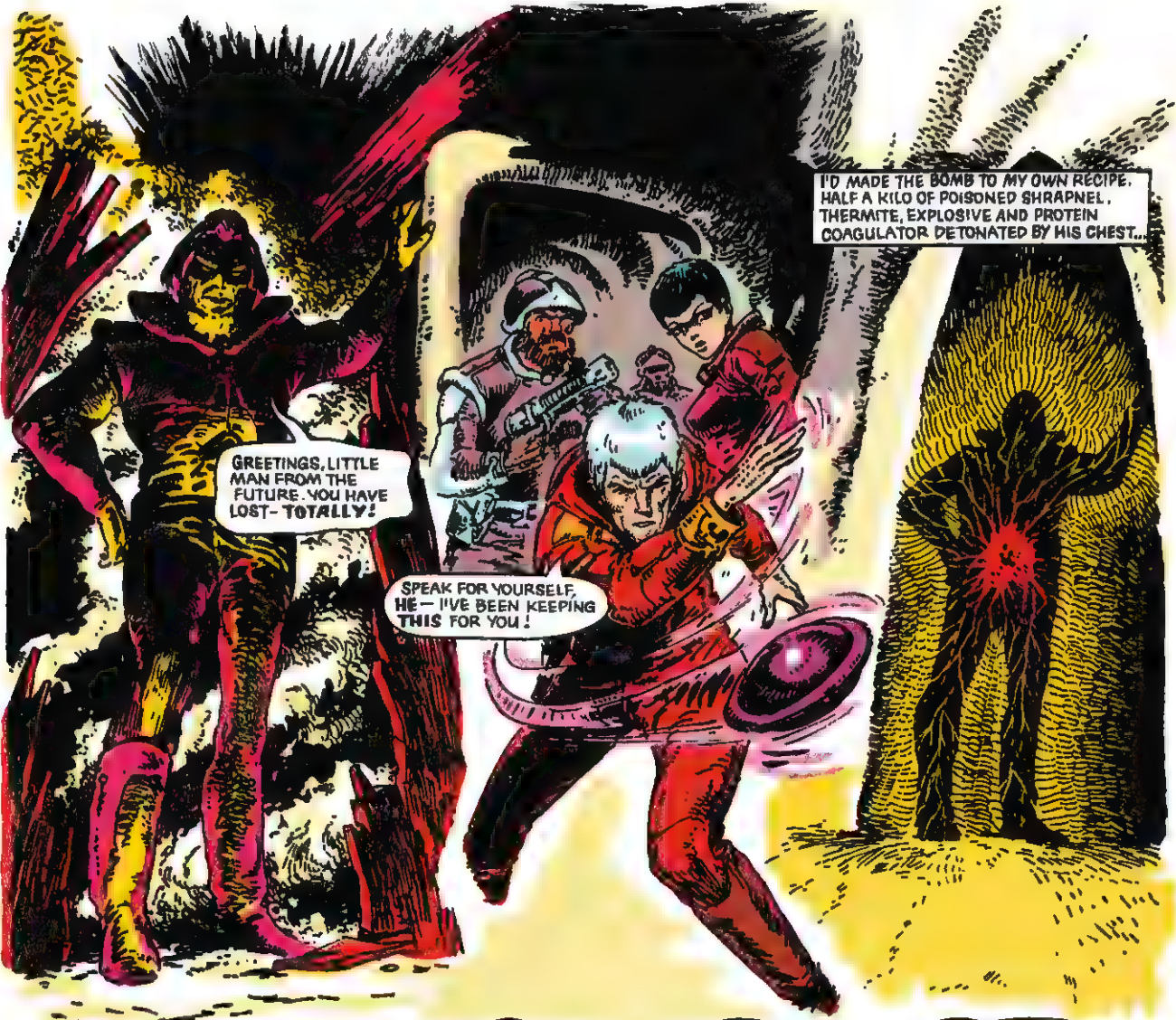


EVENUALLY...

DAMNIT! I'M NOT GETTING A READING, BUT HE'S BEHIND THAT DOOR—GOT TO BE!

THEN LET'S FIND OUT...

WITH A HIGH EXPLOSIVE!



I'D MADE THE BOMB TO MY OWN RECIPE. HALF A KILO OF POISONED SHRAPNEL, THERMITE, EXPLOSIVE AND PROTEIN COAGULATOR DETONATED BY HIS CHEST...

GREETINGS, LITTLE MAN FROM THE FUTURE. YOU HAVE LOST - TOTALLY!

SPEAK FOR YOURSELF, HE - I'VE BEEN KEEPING THIS FOR YOU!



BUT...


SINCE I AM SURE YOU WILL TRY TO DESTROY ME THE MOMENT YOU ENTER THIS ROOM, I HAVE ALREADY LEFT IT. THIS HOLOGRAM RECORDING WILL SERVE ONLY TO TELL YOU OF YOUR FORTHCOMING DEATH!

HOLOGRAM? I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN IT WAS TOO EASY!

THE ESSENTIAL PEOPLE I NEED HAVE ALREADY BEEN EVACUATED TO A SAFE PLACE IN TIME. I SHALL BUILD FROM THERE, I SHALL CONTROL ALL ETERNITY!

AND IN ONE HOUR, EVERY NUCLEAR WEAPON ON EARTH WILL BE TRIGGERED, DESTROYING IT FOR ALL TIME!





YOU HAVE JUST
ENOUGH TIME TO
SUFFER HORRIBLY.
FAREWELL!

WELL THAT'S IT, TEAM.
WE BLEW IT. ONLY WAY
OUT NOW WOULD BE
FOR A TIME HELIX
TO APPEAR OUT OF
THIN AIR ...

PING!

TIME HELIX
OPEN
WITH CARE
THIS WAY UP

OH, JAMES.
YOU'RE SO CLEVER!
I'M SO GLAD I
MARRIED YOU ...

YOU MUST EXPLAIN
HOW YOU DID IT. AND
LOOK-A TAPE
MESSAGE ON
THE SIDE. MUST BE
FROM COYPU UP
AT SPECIAL CORPS
HQ...



I SUGGEST YOU MOVE QUICKLY.
THE MECHANISM CONTROLLING
THE BOMBS DESIGNED TO
DESTROY THE PLANET IS IN
A BLACK PANEL NEAR
THE DOOR...

GET THE DISPLAY FIGURES
TO READ 666 ...



THERE I GO.
SAVED THE
WORLD-
AGAIN!



... DO NOT THINK YOU HAVE SAVED
THE WORLD. YOU HAVE MERELY
DELAYED ITS DESTRUCTION
FOR 28 DAYS. THIS WILL GIVE
YOU ENOUGH TIME TO
ASSEMBLE THE TIME HELIX AND
ALSO ENABLE THE MARTIANS
TO RENDEZVOUS WITH THEIR
INCOMING SHIPS AND LEAVE
BEFORE THE EXPLOSION.



THERE IS A MOLECULAR
DISRUPTOR ON THE HELIX
WHICH WILL HELP THE
MARTIANS BORE
THEIR WAY SAFELY OUT
OF THE CASTLE!



WE WILL NEVER
FORGET WHAT YOU
HAVE DONE FOR OUR
PEOPLE. WE WILL ERECT
A STATUE TO YOU
ON MARS: "JAMES
DIGRIZ-WORLD
SAVER".

YOU SURE
YOU'VE GOT THE
SPELLING
RIGHT...?



GET OVER HERE
AND HELP ME GET
THIS HELIX RIGHT,
DIGRIZ, OR I'LL
LEAVE WITHOUT
YOU!



FAREWELL,
WORLD-
SAVER!

AHEM! UNACCUSTOMED
AS I AM TO PUBLIC SPEAKING,
THE PORTENTIOUS EVENTS
OF THE PAST FEW HOURS
LEAD ME TO SAY A FEW
WORDS...

CAN IT, 'WORLD
SAVER'. WE'RE
GOING HOME.
BYE, LADS!



WE'RE HERE!
ACTIVATE THE
GRAV 'CHUTE,
JAMES!

GRAV 'CHUTE?
I THOUGHT
YOU HAD IT!
THAT MEANS
WE'RE GOING
TO LAND WITH
A...



BUMP!

HELLO
COYPU!

EH? WHAT ARE
YOU DOING HERE?
YOU'RE MEANT
TO BE BACK IN
TIME SAVING
THE WORLD!



WE JUST DID,
COYPU. YOU SHOULD
KNOW, YOU
SUMMONED US
BACK!

NO I DIDN'T, WE'VE
BEEN SENDING WRITTEN
MESSAGES BY THE
THOUSAND, ADVISING
YOU OF THE IMPENDING
DOOM OF THE PLANET,
BUT...

FOR HEAVEN'S SAKE,
COYPU! YOU SENT
ONE OF THOSE
PORTABLE HELIXES
BACK TO US...

IMPOSSIBLE.
THIS IS THE ONLY
ONE IN EXISTENCE-
THE PROTOTYPE...

WHAAAT! THIS CAN ONLY
MEAN ONE THING. WE'VE
GOT TO GET IT DOWN TO
YOUR LAB AND FAST.
WE'VE GOT TO SEND IT
TO OURSELVES!

THERE FOLLOWED A FEVERISH HOUR
OF ACTIVITY AS WE LOADED AND
LABELLED THE HELIX AND I GOT COYPU
TO DICTATE THE MESSAGE INTO HIS
RECORDER-

WELL I HOPE IT MAKES
SOME SENSE TO YOU WHEN
YOU GET IT, ALL THIS
STUFF ABOUT 666 AND
MARTIANS...

DON'T
WORRY,
IT DID.
SO JUST
SEND IT,
HUH?

YES. NOW I THINK
ABOUT IT, IT DOES
HAVE A CERTAIN
LOGIO!

WELL I'M GLAD
SOMEONE UNDER-
STANDS IT ALL.
THIS WHOLE TIME
TRAVEL SCENE
HAS TIED MY BRAIN
IN KNOTS!

ALL QUITE SIMPLE REALLY. YOU
DESTROYED HIS OPERATION TWICE
IN THE REMOTE PAST AND SENT HIM
UP TO THE TWILIGHT OF EARTH. THERE
HE RE-BUILT HIS FORCES AND
RETURNED TO THE 20th CENTURY
TO START THE ATTACK AGAIN.
SENDING THAT HELIX
BACK NOW COMPLETES
THE LOOP. IT'S ALL OVER.
HE IS STUCK IN A TIME-
LOOP HE CAN NEVER
GET OUT OF!

WELL, IN A WAY, YOU PROBABLY
DID START IT ALL. LIKE THE 666
DATA. ALL PART OF THE TIME
TRAVEL PARADOX...

BUT THAT MAKES IT SOUND LIKE I
STARTED THE WHOLE THING BY RE-
SETTING HIS DESTINATION FROM 1807.
AND WHERE DID THE 666 DATA
COME FROM? I'VE JUST TOLD IT TO
MYSELF SO I CAN SURVIVE TO
TRAVEL HERE AND TELL IT TO MYSELF
AGAIN!

I DON'T WANT
TO HEAR ANYMORE.
MY BRAIN HURTS
ENOUGH...

TIME TRAVEL WAS BAD ENOUGH.
BUT WHEN ANGIE WALKED IN
WITH OUR KIDS, THE TWINS THAT
I THOUGHT WERE STILL BABIES...

C'MON, BOYS.
SAY HELLO TO
YOUR DAD...

HI,
PA!

BUT-BUT OUR
KIDS ARE ONLY
A YEAR OLD!
THESE ARE AT
LEAST FIVE...

COYPU EXPLAINED THAT ONE-
ALTHOUGH ONLY TWO MONTHS
HAD PASSED FOR ME, I'D BEEN
AWAY FROM THE CORPS FOR
FOUR YEARS...

HI, JAMES!

I'M JAMES.
HE'S BOLIVAR!



IT WAS GETTING TO BE A REGULAR PARTY. CORPS BOSS INSKIPP WAS NEXT...

DIGRIZ! FOUR YEARS YOU'VE BEEN HIDING FROM ME! NOW ABOUT THESE EXPENSES, I KNOW YOU'RE ON THE FIDDLE...

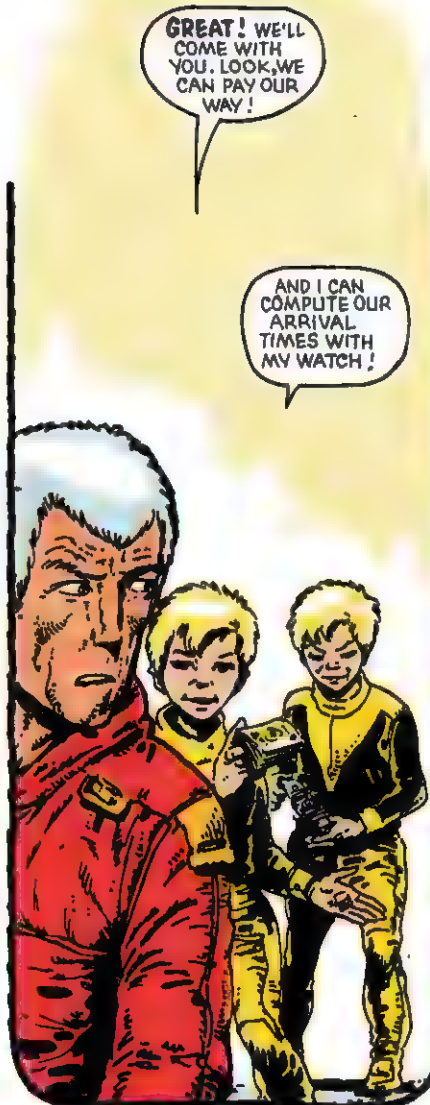


OH DEAR, THE POOR MAN SEEMS TO HAVE FAINTED!

NUTS! MUM GOT HIM WITH A TRANK DART. HE'LL BE OUT FOR HOURS!

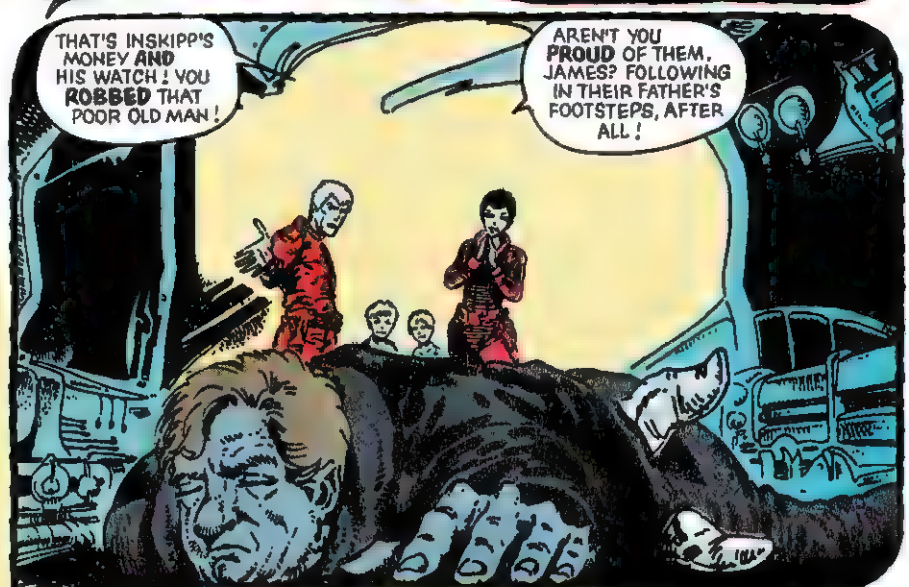


GOOD. NOW THAT NASTY OLD MAN'S OUT OF THE WAY WE CAN STEAL HIS SPACE-SHIP AGAIN AND HAVE A NICE, CRIMINAL HOLIDAY!



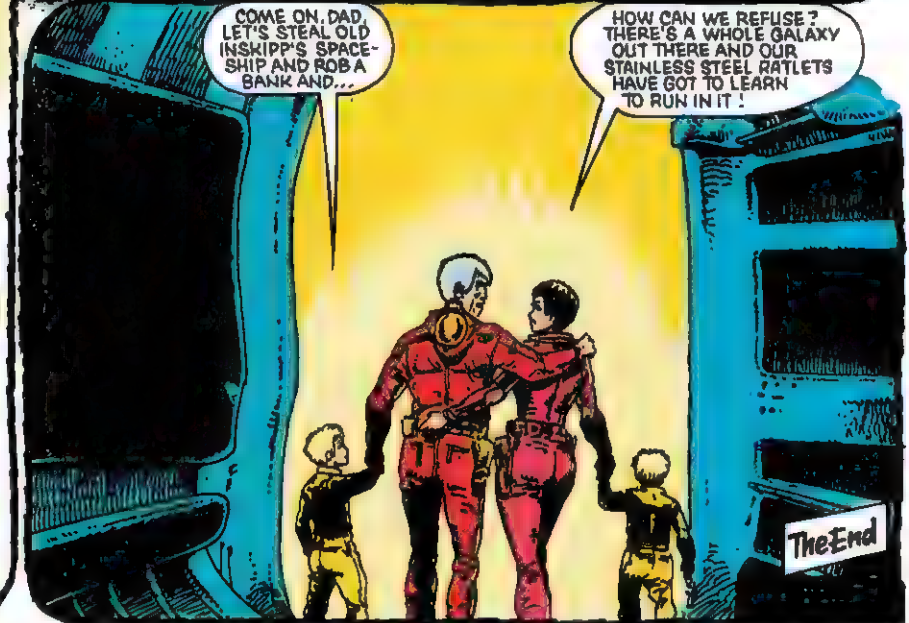
GREAT! WE'LL COME WITH YOU. LOOK, WE CAN PAY OUR WAY!

AND I CAN COMPUTE OUR ARRIVAL TIMES WITH MY WATCH!



THAT'S INSKIPP'S MONEY AND HIS WATCH! YOU ROBBED THAT POOR OLD MAN!

AREN'T YOU PROUD OF THEM, JAMES? FOLLOWING IN THEIR FATHER'S FOOTSTEPS, AFTER ALL!



COME ON, DAD LET'S STEAL OLD INSKIPP'S SPACE-SHIP AND ROB A BANK AND...

HOW CAN WE REFUSE? THERE'S A WHOLE GALAXY OUT THERE AND OUR STAINLESS STEEL RATLETS HAVE GOT TO LEARN TO RUN IN IT!

The End



The Stainless Steel Rat issue 5 cover, art by Carlos Ezquerro, 1986

BASED ON THE

BOOK BY HARRY HARRISON © HARRY HARRISON 1982

The Stainless Steel Rat



FOR PRESIDENT

— PART ONE —

IN MAN'S FAR FUTURE, THE GALAXY IS RICH AND PROSPEROUS. CRIME IS A THING OF THE PAST... WELL, ALMOST.



A FEW DIEHARD CRIMINALS STILL EXIST. A TOUCH OF BRIBERY HERE...

... A BIT OF PERSONAL THEFT THERE...



... AND SOME NOT SO TEENSY LARCENY AS WELL!



YEP, ALL THE CLASSIC CRIMES ARE STILL WITH US. MIND YOU, THEY ADD A DASH OF EXCITEMENT TO THE HUMDRUM LIVES OF THE PEOPLE.

OUR FIRST LADY ANGELINA

PERSONALLY, I RECKON FOLKS OUGHT TO THANK THE CRIMINAL FOR THIS USEFUL ROLE HE PLAYS. BUT THERE AGAIN I WOULD, SINCE I AM NONE OTHER THAN JAMES BOLIVAR DIGRIZ, ALIAS SLIPPERY JIM, ALIAS THE STAINLESS STEEL RAT — THE GALAXY'S TOP CRIMINAL!

JIM'LL FIX IT!

FOR PRESIDENT

LONG LIVE THE PRESIDENT

HAIL TO

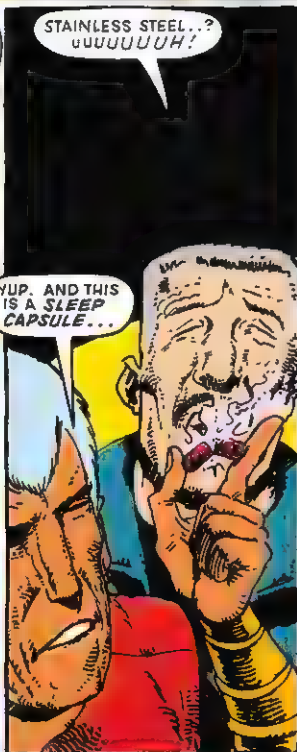
AS OUR TALE OPENS, I AM ABOUT TO TRY MY HAND AT A RACKET AS OLD AS CRIME ITSELF... POLITICS!

ADAPTATION:
KELVIN GOSNELL

ART:
CARLOS EZQUERRA

LETTERING:
JACK POTTER

COLORING:
JANET LANDAU





ACTUALLY, THE SAGA WAS FAR FROM OVER. ANGELINA AND I NEVER GO ANYWHERE WITHOUT PLANNING AN ESCAPE ROUTE...



...AND A SAFE HOUSE TO HOLE UP IN FOR A WHILE.



I WAS JUST DRYING OUT WHEN SHE ARRIVED BACK...

HALLO, DEAR. DEAL WITH THE COPS. DID YOU?



SORT OF...



I BROUGHT THEM WITH ME!

GETTIN!



THIS IS TREACHERY, O TRAITOROUS WIFE!

JIM, DEAR, THE NICE POLICEMEN JUST WANT TO TALK TO US!



AND DON'T USE WORDS LIKE 'TRAITOR' TO ME, OR I WILL PERSONALLY REMOVE YOUR LARYNX...

ANGELINA, AS YOU MAY HAVE GUESSED, HAS A VIOLENT STREAK THAT OCCASIONALLY SHOWS.

NOW THEN, MR diGRIZ. WE'VE HAD A MURDER, OUR FIRST ONE ON BLODGETT FOR 113 YEARS. DO YOU RECOGNISE THE VICTIM IN THIS HOLOGRAM?

NOPE.

THEN HOW DO YOU EXPLAIN THIS NOTE WE FOUND ON HIM?

STAMPUS
STEAL
ROTA

EXCEPT TO SAY THAT THE STIFF COULDN'T SPELL, I KNEW NOTHING. THE CAPTAIN ASKED MORE SILLY QUESTIONS, AND WOULDN'T ANSWER ANY OF MINE. EVENTUALLY, HE AND HIS POSSE LEFT...

ARE YOU REALLY SURE YOU KNOW NOTHING ABOUT THE STIFF?

REALLY. BUT I THINK IT'S TIME I DID...

AND SO I PAID A MIDNIGHT VISIT TO THE MORGUE...

I TOOK SAMPLES FROM THE DEAD MAN'S BODY... HAIR CLIPPINGS, SKIN SCRAPES, NAIL DIRT...

THEY'D ALL HELP TO IDENTIFY HIM...

AT THIS POINT I MUST MENTION, CONFESS EVEN, THAT I DO HAVE A CERTAIN RELATIONSHIP WITH THE SPECIAL CORPS—THAT GALAXY-WIDE, ELITE POLICE FORCE, SO SECRET THAT MOST PEOPLE THINK THEY ARE JUST A RUMOUR.

THE CORPS EMPLOYS ME TO DO THEIR DIRTY WORK AND I OCCASIONALLY DO THE DIRTY ON THEM.

SO, A FEW DAYS LATER...

I'VE BROUGHT YOUR SAMPLE ANALYSIS BACK FROM SPECIAL CORPS, MR diGRIZ. AND I'VE—ER—GOT A MESSAGE FROM INSKIPP.

OH? AND WHAT DOES OUR BELOVED LEADER HAVE TO SAY, CHARLEY...?

HE SAYS BEFORE I RELEASE ANY DATA TO A DEPRAVED CROOK I'M TO COLLECT THE 75,000 CREDITS OF CORPS MONEY WHICH SAID CROOK EMBEZZLED!

ME? A DEPRAVED CROOK? WHY!?

CALM DOWN. HERE'S THE MONEY, A SIMPLE ACCOUNTING ERROR, THAT'S ALL.

CHARLEY SET UP THE MESSAGE CASE, WE PUNCHED OUR ACCESS CODES AND RAN IT...

YEAH, I KNOW, I KNOW.

YOU WILL BY NOW HAVE REPAID YOUR STOLEN FUNDS OR YOU WOULD NOT BE RECEIVING THIS MESSAGE. IT IS ONLY BECAUSE OF THE CORPS' INTEREST IN PARAISO-AQUI THAT I HAVE NOT HAD YOU ARRESTED...

PARAISO-AQUI? I'M NOT INTERESTED IN THAT, WHATEVER IT IS. I WANT TO KNOW THE IDENTITY OF THE MURDERED MAN.

PARAISO-AQUI IS THE HOMEWORLD OF THE MURDER VICTIM. THE CORPS WANTS YOU TO FOLLOW THE LEAD AND STOP STEALING THE CORPS' MONEY!

INSKIPP HAD INCLUDED AN INFORMATION DISC ON PARAISO-AQUI. I RAN IT THROUGH...

RIDICULOUS! NOT ONLY DO I NOT KNOW THE STIFF, I'VE NEVER HEARD OF HIS HOMEWORLD.

I SUPPOSE SO. BY THE WAY, WHERE DID YOU GET THAT 75,000 CRED\$? I THOUGHT WE'D SPENT THE LOT...

BESIDES... A WIFE'S GOT TO HAVE SOME SECRETS!

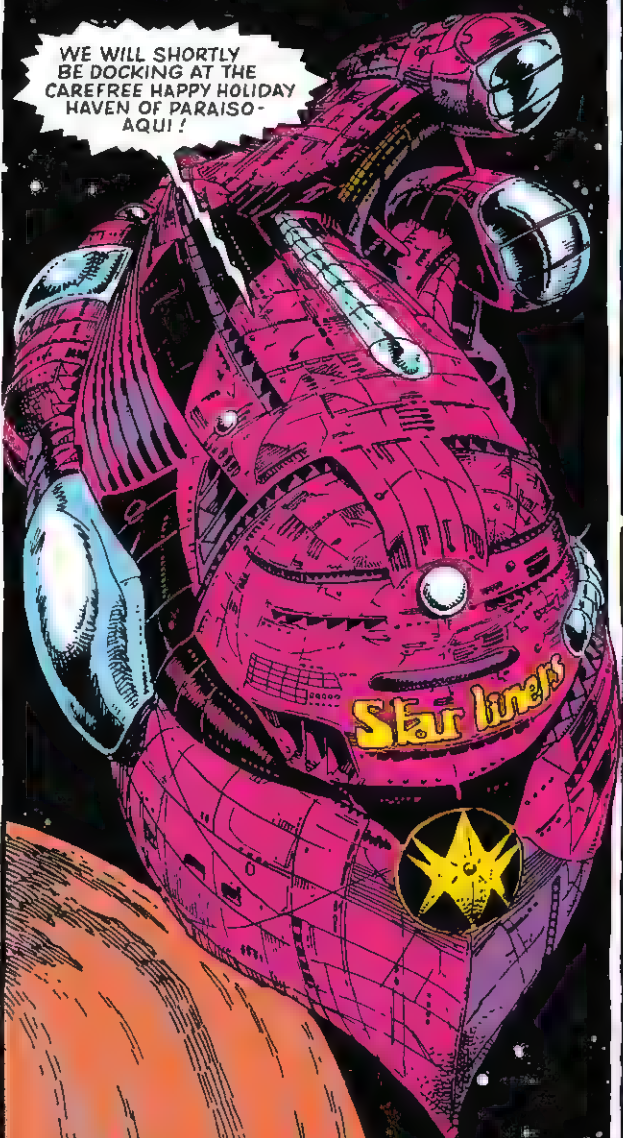
WELL, WE'LL JUST HAVE TO OBEY ORDERS FOR ONCE AND GO THERE.

NOT TELLING.

BUDGET BUGLE
SECOND MAJOR FEMALE SHOCK! ROBBER GRAB 75,000 CRED\$

...A FEW DAYS LATER OUR CRUISE LINER SLIPPED INTO ORBIT AROUND PARAISO-AQUI. I KNEW ONLY TWO THINGS ABOUT THE PLANET— THAT A GUY FROM IT HAD BEEN MURDERED TO STOP HIM CONTACTING ME, AND THAT THE TOURIST BLURB WAS A PACK OF LIES...

WE WILL SHORTLY BE DOCKING AT THE CAREFREE HAPPY HOLIDAY HAVEN OF PARAISO-AQUI!



ACCORDING TO THE SPECIAL CORPS REPORT THIS "HAPPY HOLIDAY HAVEN" HAD THE MOST CORRUPT FORM OF GOVERNMENT IN THE KNOWN GALAXY. NICE LINE IN OPPRESSION TOO— OVER 50,000 CITIZENS DISAPPEARED EVERY YEAR.

PARAISO-AQUI WAS CERTAINLY PRIMITIVE, AND THE POLICE'S FIREPOWER, TOGETHER WITH THE STARVING CONDITION OF THE PEASANTS, MEANT THAT IT WAS ALSO VIOLENT AND RIDDLED WITH CORRUPTION...



OH, LOOK! THOSE THINGEYS WITH FOUR LEGS. WHAT ARE THEY?

HORSES, DEAR. SAID TO HAVE COME FROM MAN'S LEGENDARY HOMEWORLD CALLED EARTH OR DIRT OR SOMETHING.

THE PLACE LOOKED AFTER ITS TOURISTS IN FIRST CLASS LUXURY, THOUGH. IT HAD TO! WITHOUT THEIR MONEY, IT WAS BROKE. OUR HOTEL WAS EXPENSIVE AND LUXURIOUS...



YOU GO IN AND UNPACK, ANGELINA. I THINK I'LL NOSE AROUND A BIT...

TYPICAL! LEAVING YOUR POOR WIFE TO DO ALL THE HARD WORK!

I HAD TO AGREE WITH HER, BUT IT WAS ALL PART OF OUR 'AVERAGE TOURIST' ROUTINE. ANYWAY I NEEDED SOME READING MATERIAL...

I'D LIKE A BOOK ON PLANETARY HISTORY. NOT A TOURIST PROPAGANDA LEAFLET—THE REAL THING...

I THINK YOU WILL FIND WHAT YOU WANT IN HERE...

I TURNED AWAY TO BROWSE THROUGH. I SAW THE NOTE IMMEDIATELY. BUT THEN, SO DID SOMEONE ELSE...

I WANT THAT BOOK!

DO NOT BE SEEN WITH THIS BOOK

THAT TONE OF VOICE MEANT ONLY ONE THING—COP!

... LIKE THIS!

UUNNF!

CAN'T HAVE IT! IT'S VERY BORING AND WOULD SEND YOU STRAIGHT TO SLEEP...

YES, A VERY INTERESTING WORK YOUR ASSISTANT GAVE ME. I'LL TAKE IT...

B-BUT I-ER-DO NOT HAVE AN ASSISTANT. I-I DO NOT STOCK THAT BOOK. TAKE IT. TAKE IT AWAY!

FASCINATING. EITHER THIS IS A GENUINE CONTACT OR A TRAP. AND EITHER WAY OUR COVER'S BLOWN.

IT CALLED FOR A COUNCIL OF WAR. SO, AT THE HOTEL ...

THERE'S A SCRIBBLE ON THE BACK OF THE NOTE—SETTING A MEETING ON THE BEACH AT MIDNIGHT. IT'S GOT TO BE A TRAP.

THEN WHY DID THE UGLY TRY TO TAKE ME JUST NOW? I THINK IT'S FOR REAL...

KERRASH!

STAND ASIDE, WOMAN! THIS IS MAN'S BUSINESS!

OH, DEAR. IF ONLY HE HADN'T SAID THAT...

I MEAN HE COULD HAVE SAID, "EXCUSE ME, MADAM. I WISH TO SHOOT YOUR HUSBAND." THEN ANGELINA WOULDN'T HAVE BROKEN ANY BONES.

KRAK!

NOOOOOO!

AAAAH!

DON'T KNOW WHAT THEY WANTED, BUT IT PROVES THE MEETING IS NO TRAP. I'LL GO, YOU KEEP THE COPS BUSY.

ONE OF THOSE UNIFORMS WILL HELP!

WE HAD TO GET OUT FAST AFTER THAT—SHE BY THE STAIRS, ME BY A MONO-FILAMENT WIRE DOWN THE WALL.

I THOUGHT ABSEILING DOWN THE WALL WOULD TAKE 'EM BY SURPRISE. HOW WRONG CAN YOU GET?

WHOOOPS!

SQUAD 2—INSIDE!

THERE HE IS! FIRE!

SEE YOU AT BREAKFAST, DEAR. AND PLEASE DON'T KILL ANYONE—YOU KNOW I DON'T LIKE IT.

I'LL TRY. BE GOOD YOURSELF.

KRASH!

EEEEEE!



NO TIME TO EXPLAIN. JUST STAY BEHIND THE BED TILL THE GUN-FIRE STOPS!

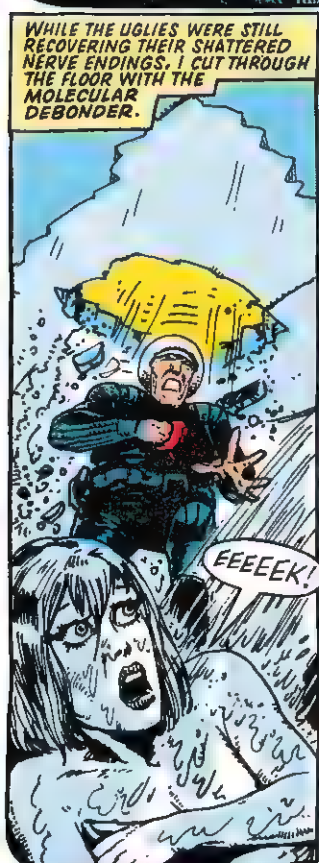
GUNFIRE?

WHAT GUNFIRE?

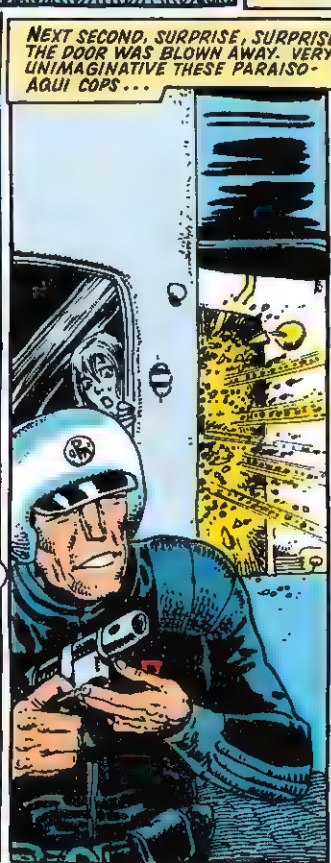


THAT GUNFIRE.

I WAS GETTING USED TO THE POLICE STYLE; ATTACK FIRST AND ASK QUESTIONS LATER - IF ANYONE WAS LEFT ALIVE. I REPLIED WITH A STUN GRENADE.....



WHILE THE UGLIES WERE STILL RECOVERING THEIR SHATTERED NERVE ENDINGS, I CUT THROUGH THE FLOOR WITH THE MOLECULAR DEBONDER.



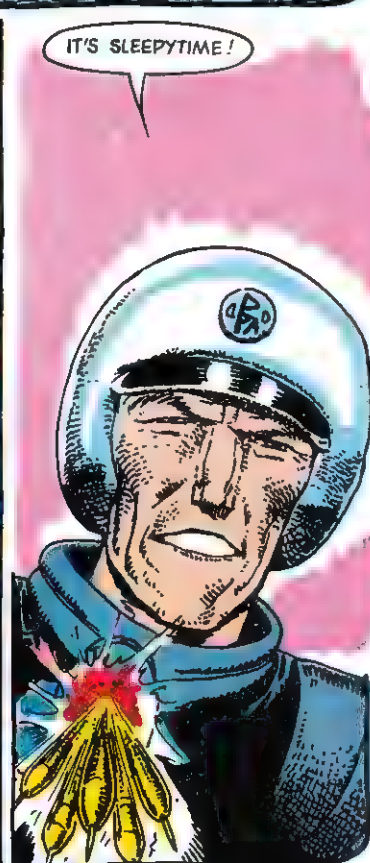
NEXT SECOND, SURPRISE, SURPRISE, THE DOOR WAS BLOWN AWAY. VERY UNIMAGINATIVE THESE PARAISO-AQUI COPS...



THIS TIME I WANTED TO TAKE 'EM QUIETLY...

SAY GOODNIGHT, BOYS.

EH?



IT'S SLEEPYTIME!



THE OTHER SQUADS DIDN'T KNOW I'D JUST PUT THEIR PALS TO SLEEP FOR 24 HOURS...



MUST BE OUTSIDE - QUICKLY!

TIME TO JOIN THE BAD GUYS...



ONCE OUTSIDE, IT WAS EASY TO SLIP AWAY AND DISAPPEAR UNTIL THE FOLLOWING MORNING...

WHEN I HAD JUST ENOUGH TIME TO DEBRIEF ANGELINA ON HER MIDNIGHT MEETING...

OH, I THINK WE CAN DO BETTER THAN THAT...

I'M SURE THEY'RE GENUINE. MY CONTACT WAS DESPERATE. WANTS US TO DELIVER A MESSAGE TO THE GALACTIC COUNCIL DESCRIBING THE OPPRESSION AND TORTURE AND CORRUPTION HERE.

FIRST OF ALL WE'VE GOT TO GET OFF THIS PLANET. AH... I THINK I'VE JUST SEEN OUR WAY OUT!

THERE'S THE SWINE. GET HIM!

THE LEADER OF THE UGLY SQUAD WAS ANGRY, WHICH IS JUST WHAT I WANTED!

YOU DOG. YOU CONSORT WITH CRIMINALS, YOU ATTACK MY MEN. YOU DESTROY THE PEACE OF OUR PEACEFUL WORLD. YOU WILL SUFFER FOR THIS!

NO, NO, DON'T TORTURE ME! I AM JUST AN INNOCENT TOURIST. CALL MY EMBASSY, SOMEONE, CALL THE GALACTIC COUNCIL. DON'T LET THEM PULL OUT MY FINGERNAILS!

SHUT UP. SHUT UP.

NONSENSE. ALL I DID WAS DEFEND MYSELF. AND WHAT'S MORE I AM NOT GOING TO SUFFER BECAUSE YOU ARE GOING TO LET ME GO. WATCH...

GOOD HEAVENS!

I SAY!

I WHISPERED THE NEXT BIT...

SO, UNLESS YOU WANT TO RUIN YOUR TOURIST INDUSTRY WITH BAD PUBLICITY AND SEND THIS MUDBALL INTO BANKRUPTCY, YOU ARE GOING TO LET ME GO—AREN'T YOU?

MY WIFE AND I HAVE NO WISH TO CONTINUE BEING TOURISTS IN SUCH A ROUGH, UNCOUTH PLACE.

COME, DEAR. LET US PACK...

LUCKILY THE UGLIES DIDN'T HEAR THE NEXT WORDS...

BUT WHEN WE COME BACK, PAL...

... YOU'LL WONDER WHAT HIT YOU!

YES—I AM GOING TO LET YOU GO. BUT YOU ARE GOING TO LEAVE HERE ON THE NEXT SHIP.

SO THAT WAS HOW,
A FEW DAYS LATER,
ALL FOUR MEM-
BERS OF THE diGRIZ
FAMILY CAME TO BE
SCREAMING BACK TO
THE PLANET, ARMED
TO THE TEETH...

OUR SONS, JAMES AND BOLIVAR,
HAD VOLUNTEERED TO COME ALONG
FOR THE BATTLE...

WELL... WHEN YOU'RE
GOING TO LIBERATE A
WORLD, YOU CARRY A BIT
OF HARDWARE, RIGHT?

FIRST, KNOW YOUR
ENEMY. YOUR MA'S
PUT TOGETHER A
BRIEFING...

TOP BOY ON THE PLANET
IS JULIO ZAPILOTE. HE'S
300 YEARS OLD— STRETCHED
HIS SPAN WITH GENETIC
ENGINEERING...

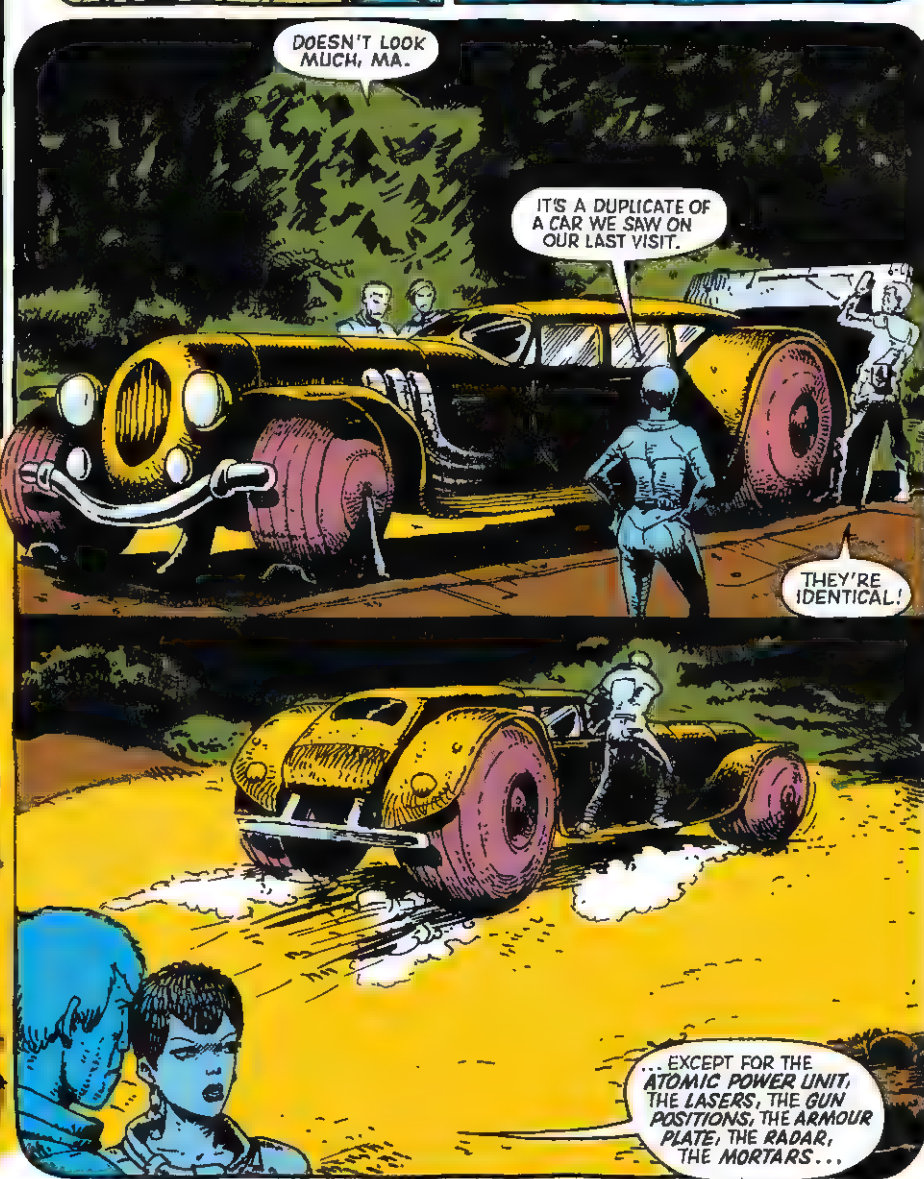
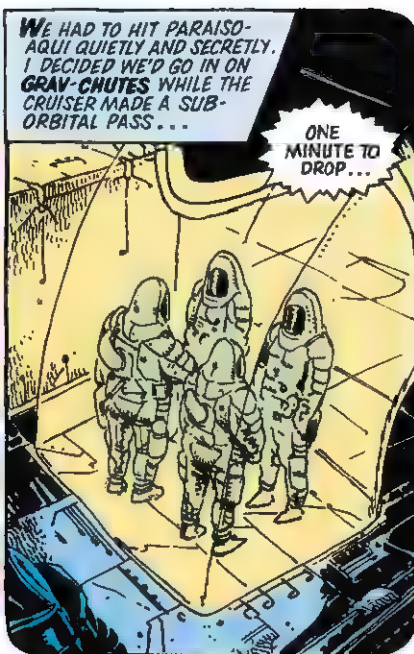
... WHICH
IS WHY HE'S
SO UGLY.

PARAISO-
AQUI WAS ONCE
A MONARCHY,
A POOR PLANET
BUT NOBODY
STARVED— AND
THEY HAD A
ROUGH BUT FAIR
JUSTICE...

THEN CAME
ZAPILOTE AND
HIS UNIQUE
BRAND OF
DEMOCRACY—
HE'S THE ONLY
GUY WHO EVER
GETS ELECTED.
HIS SECRET
POLICE ARE
EVERYWHERE,
AND THEY'RE
MEAN...

JUSTICE IS EXTING.
IF YOU'RE SUSPECTED
OF SOMETHING, YOU
DISAPPEAR— END
OF STORY.

DROP
ZONE
IN 30
MINUTES.
TIME TO
SUIT-
UP...



WE BURIED THE CHUTES AND POD BEFORE WE LEFT. JAMES AND BOLIVAR PLAYED CHAUFFEUR AND FOOTMAN—ANGELINA AND I WERE DUKE AND DUCHESS d'IGRIZ...

WHERE TO, YOUR GRACE?

STRAIGHT AHEAD, YOU WORTHLESS VASSAL.

THERE'S THE TOWN... OUR CONTACT'S A GUY CALLED JORGE. LET'S HOPE ZAPILOTE'S MEN HAVEN'T GOT HOLD OF HIM.

JORGE ISN'T EXPECTING US—GO CAREFUL.

I WILL COME LOOKING IF I'M NOT OUT IN 15 MINUTES.

I PICKED THE LOCK ON JORGE'S DOOR—A KNOCK IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT COULD ONLY MEAN SECRET POLICE...

SAY YOUR PRAYERS, POLICE PIG!

WELL... EVEN A STAINLESS STEEL RAT CAN MAKE A MISTAKE!

WE GAVE YOU A MESSAGE, AND THEN THE POLICE CAPTURED YOU—BUT YOU ARE NOT DEAD.

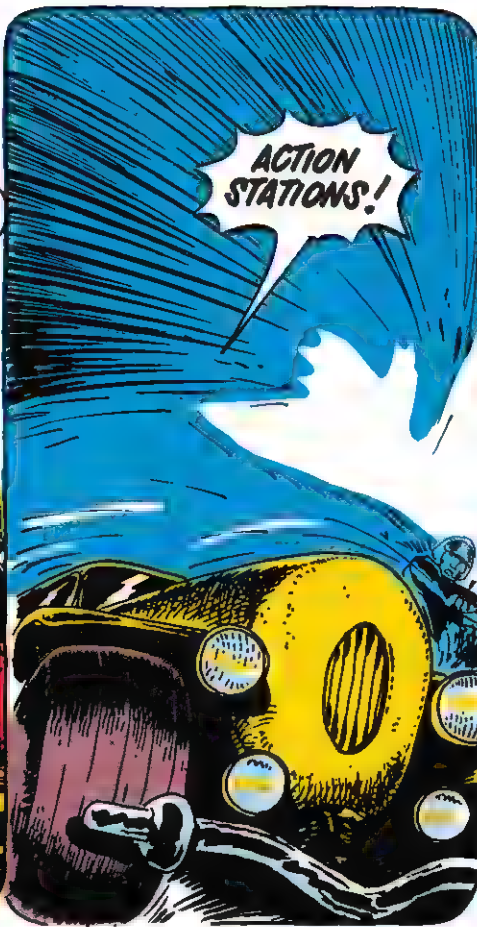
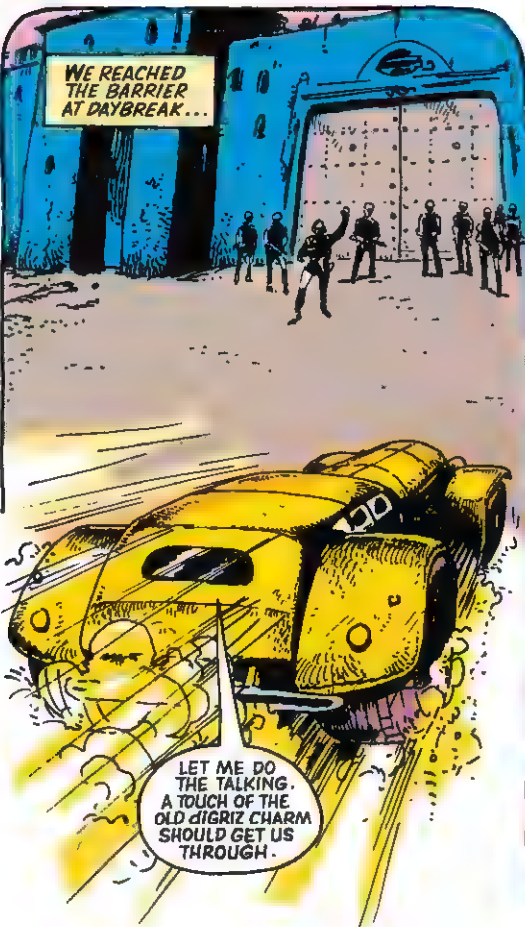
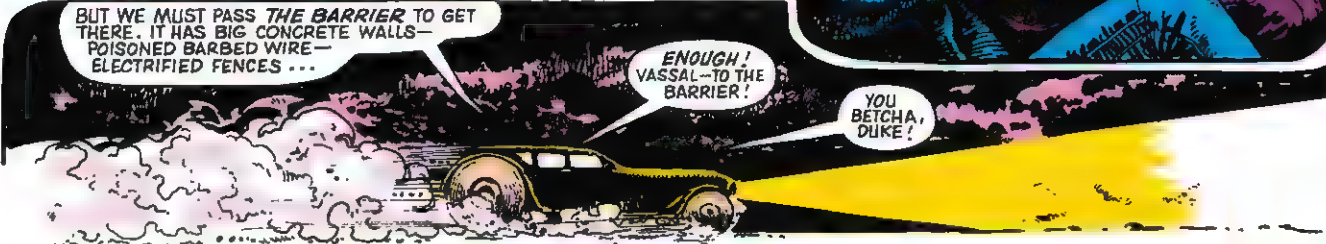
THEREFORE, YOU MUST HAVE BETRAYED US...

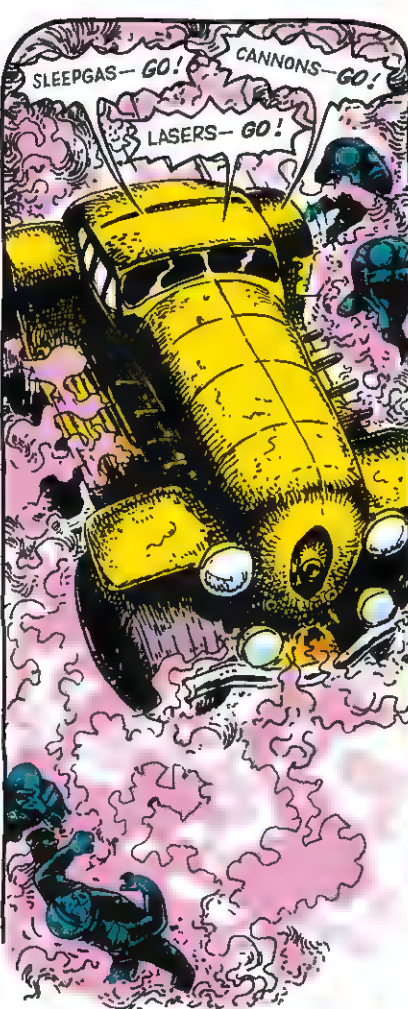
A SQUEALER? ME? JORGE, I CAME HERE TO HELP YOU!

THERE IS BUT ONE MAN WHO CAN HELP US—BUT I FEAR HE DOES NOT TRULY EXIST...

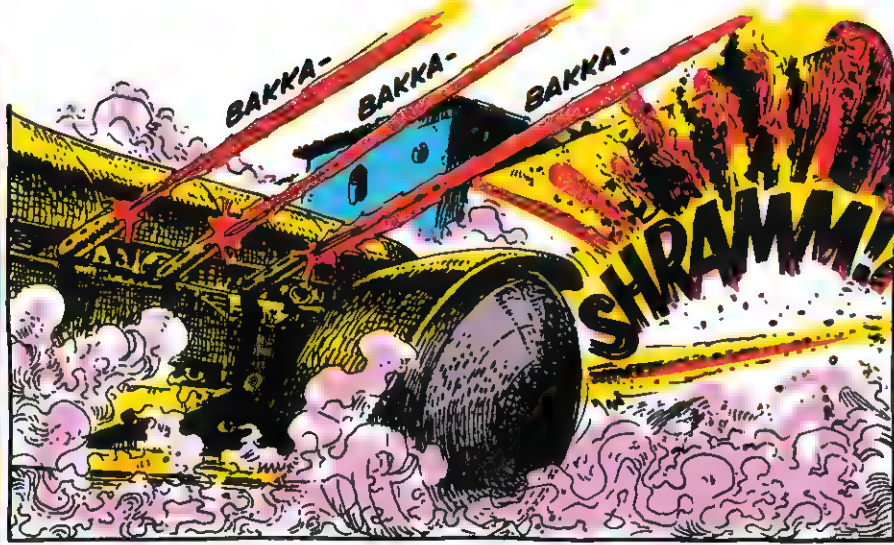
OH, I WOULDN'T SAY THAT... NOT IF YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT THE STAINLESS STEEL RAT, I MEAN.

WHAT? B-BUT ONLY I KNOW ABOUT THE RAT OF STEEL!



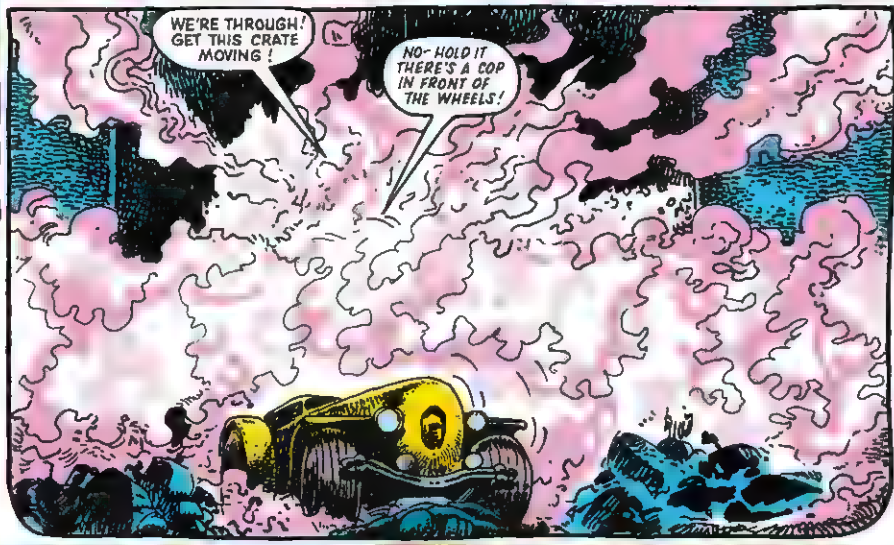


SLEEPGAS—GO! CANNONS—GO!
LASERS—GO!



BAKKA—BAKKA—BAKKA—

SHRAWWW!



WE'RE THROUGH!
GET THIS CRATE
MOVING!

NO—HOLD IT
THERE'S A COP
IN FRONT OF
THE WHEELS!

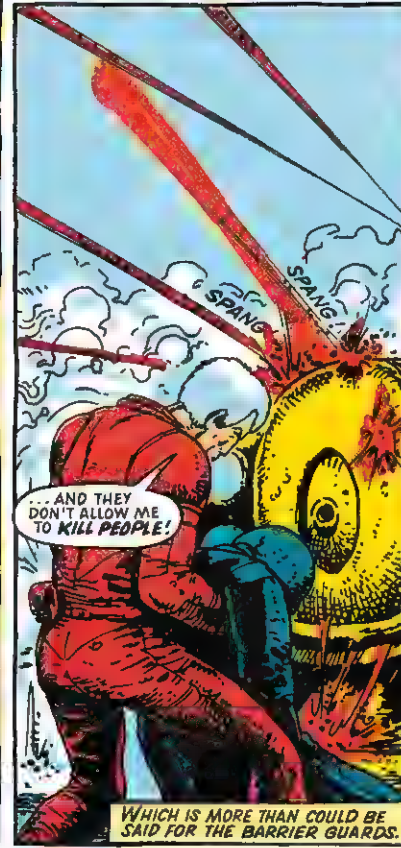


FORGET THAT
SCUM! COME
BACK!

SPINGG!

BLAT!

SORRY, JORGE.
I GOT THESE
INCONVENIENT
THINGS CALLED
MORALS...



...AND THEY
DON'T ALLOW ME
TO KILL PEOPLE!

WHICH IS MORE THAN COULD BE
SAID FOR THE BARRIER GUARDS.

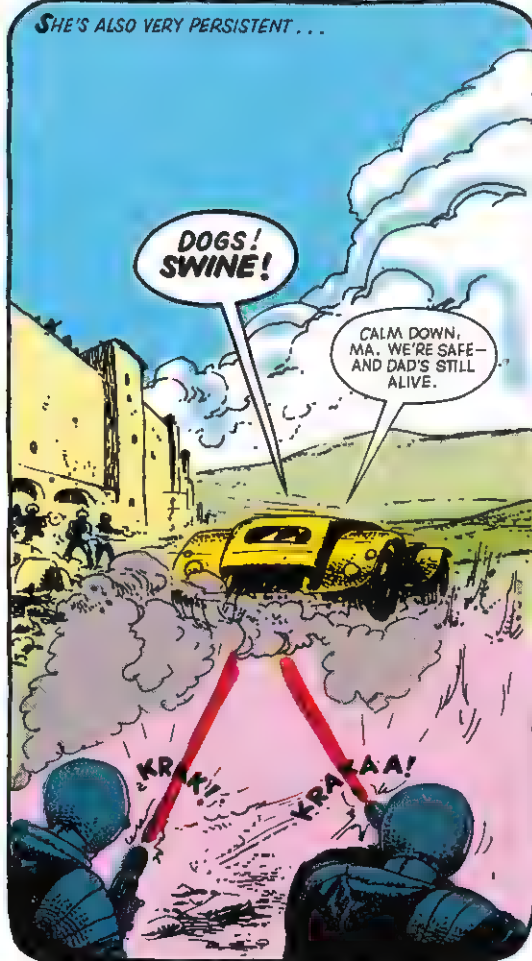
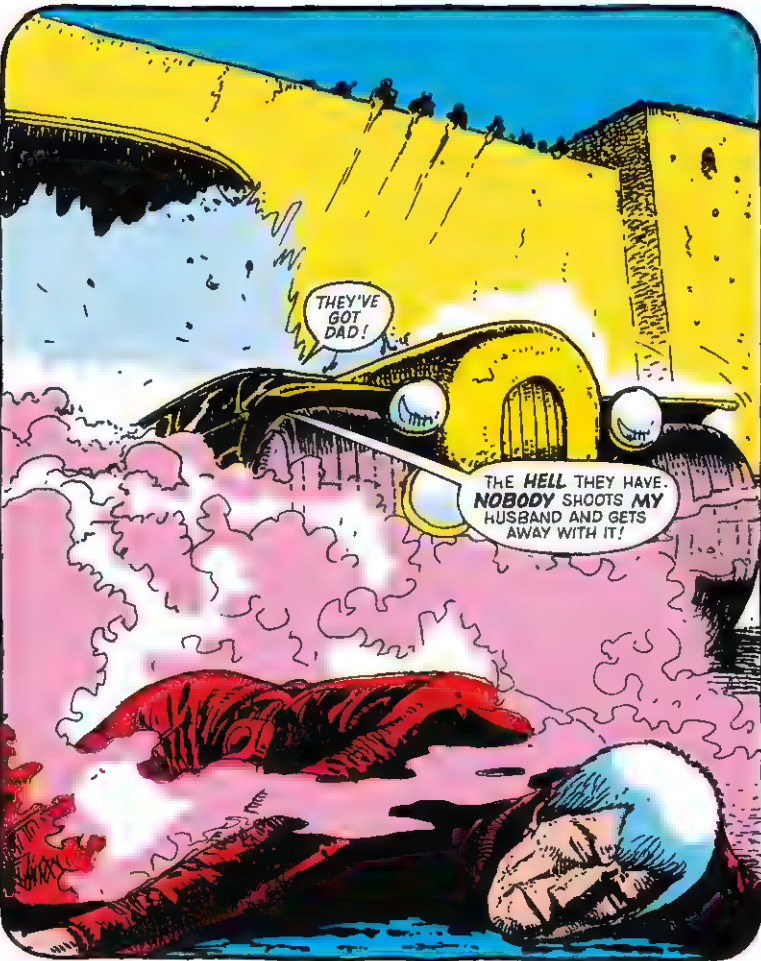


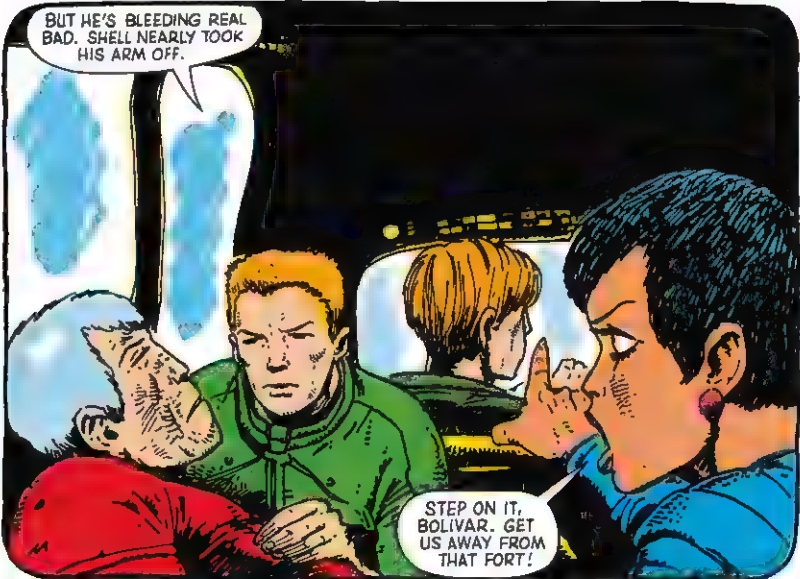
I DON'T KNOW WHERE THE SHELL
LANDED. IT FELT LIKE I'D BEEN
SMASHED BY A GIANT HAND...

AAAHH!

BA-KOOOMM!

...AND EVERY-
THING WENT
VERY DARK.





BUT HE'S BLEEDING REAL BAD. SHELL NEARLY TOOK HIS ARM OFF.

STEP ON IT, BOLIVAR. GET US AWAY FROM THAT FORT!



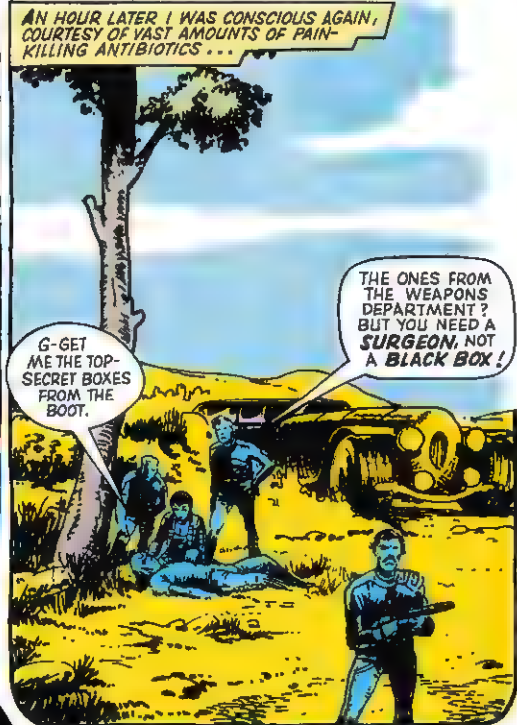
N-NO TIME... DOCTOR... NEED THIS - ONLY CHANCE!

HE'S PLAYING WITH A BOX OF TOYS. IT'S HIS PAST LIFE FLASHING BEFORE HIM - HE'S GOING TO DIE!



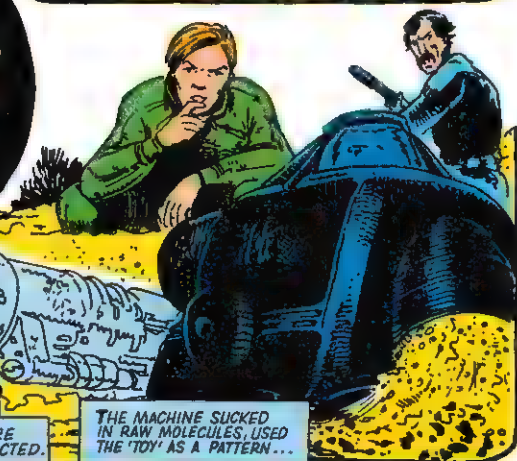
S-STICK THIS IN THE SLOT... PRESS THE G-60 BUTTON.

I WASN'T RAVING. THE BOX WAS A MOLECULAR EXTRACTOR AND RESTORER. THE TOYS WERE THINGS FOR IT TO RESTORE - BITS OF HARDWARE WITH 99% OF THEIR MOLECULES EXTRACTED.

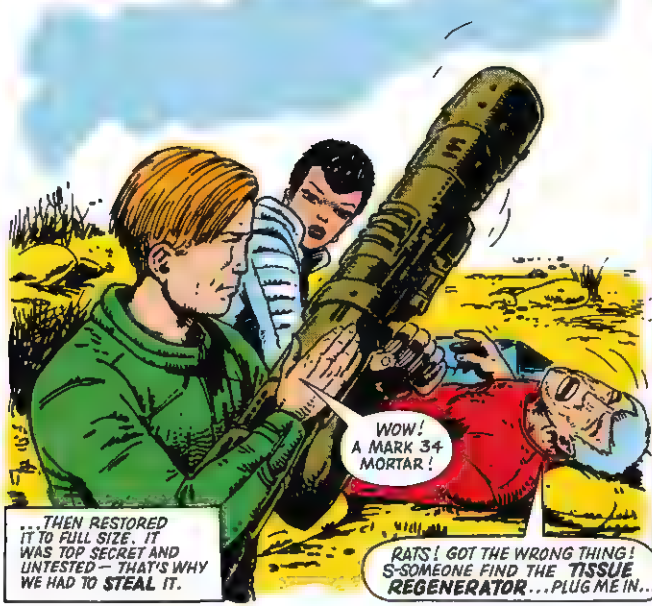


G-GET ME THE TOP-SECRET BOXES FROM THE BOOT.

THE ONES FROM THE WEAPONS DEPARTMENT? BUT YOU NEED A SURGEON, NOT A BLACK BOX!



THE MACHINE SUCKED IN RAW MOLECULES, USED THE 'TOY' AS A PATTERN...



WOW! A MARK 34 MORTAR!

...THEN RESTORED IT TO FULL SIZE. IT WAS TOP SECRET AND UNTESTED - THAT'S WHY WE HAD TO STEAL IT.

RATS! GOT THE WRONG THING! S-SOMEONE FIND THE TISSUE REGENERATOR... PLUG ME IN...



THEY DID. I SLEPT LIKE A BABY WHILE THE MACHINE SET ABOUT GROWING HEALTHY NEW MEAT ON MY WOUNDS.

SOON, WITH ONE RAT
SUITABLY RESTORED,
WE SET OFF AGAIN...

THIS IS
MY COUSIN'S
DOMAIN!

WHERE?

EVERY-
WHERE!

THE MARQUEZ DE LA ROSA, GONZALES
DE TORRES, WAS HEAD OF ONE OF THE
PLANET'S MOST ANCIENT NOBLE FAMILIES.
WE WANTED TO ENLIST HIS HELP IN
DESTROYING THE EVIL PRESIDENT
ZAPILOTE.

MAY I PRESENT THE
DUKE AND DUCHESS d'IGRIZ,
MARQUEZ.

WELCOME, MY
NOBLE FRIENDS.
COME AND DINE
WITH ME...

ANY DOUBTS I HAD VANISHED AFTER
DINNER, AS SOON AS I MENTIONED
ZAPILOTE'S NAME...

YOU SEE, DE TORRES,
MY MISSION HERE IS
TO RID YOU OF THE DOG
ZAPILOTE. I'M NOT
QUITE SURE HOW—
BUT WE HAVE TIME
TO PLAN...

THAT DEGENERATE
LUMP OF OFFAL! DEATH
IS TOO GOOD FOR HIM!
I WOULD PUT HIM INTO
A VAT OF SOMETHING,
AND...

THAT DOG CONTROLS
THE ARMED FORCES
AND THE POLICE!
A WAR WOULD BE
IMPOSSIBLE, ESPECIALLY
NOW THEY ARE ON FULL
ALERT FOR THE
ELECTION.

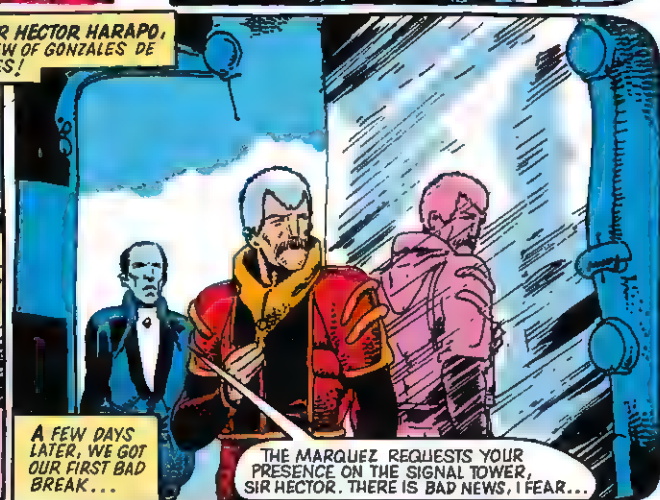
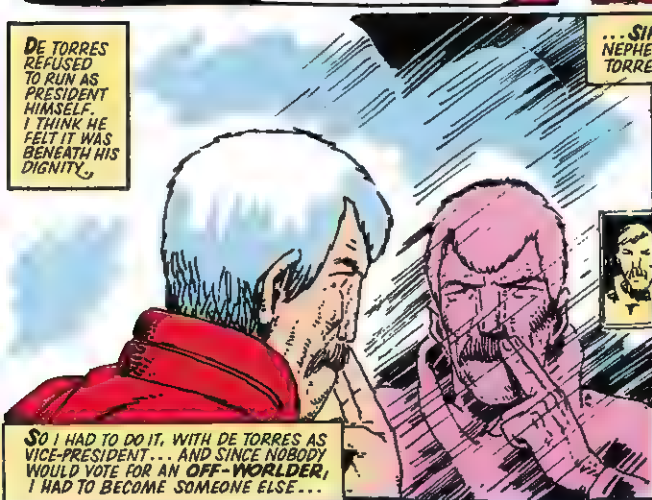
I AGREE. WAR IS
A RATHER WASTEFUL
WAY OF TAKING OVER
A PLANET. WE NEED
SOMETHING
BETTER.

SOUNDS
GREAT.
WHEN DO WE
START?

HMMM...

ELECTION..?

ELECTION!



OF COURSE IT WILL BE RIGGED- RIGGED BY US!

WHY DO YOU LAUGH? EVEN IF YOU STOOD AGAINST ZAPILOTE... AND SURVIVED... THE ELECTION WOULD BE RIGGED.

... SIR HECTOR HARAPO, NEPHEW OF GONZALES DE TORRES!

A FEW DAYS LATER, WE GOT OUR FIRST BAD BREAK...

THE MARQUEZ REQUESTS YOUR PRESENCE ON THE SIGNAL TOWER, SIR HECTOR. THERE IS BAD NEWS, I FEAR...

WE ARE LOST! I HAVE JUST LEARNED THAT ALL CANDIDATES MUST REGISTER TODAY- AT ZAPILOTE'S CASTLE! WE WOULD BE DEAD AS SOON AS WE LEFT THE HELIPORT NEARBY...

HOW ABOUT IF WE LAND IN THE CASTLE ITSELF..?

THAT IS FORBIDDEN TO ALL BUT THE PRESIDENT.

WELL, I'M THE NEXT PRESIDENT, SO I THINK THAT GIVES ME THE RIGHT. COME ON, LET'S GET THE CHOPPER READY...

THE PILOT, JUAN, KEPT THE CHOPPER LOW TO AVOID LONG-DISTANCE RADAR.

WE PULLED UP EARLY— I WANTED ZAPILOTE'S GOONS TO SPOT US HEADING FOR THE HELIPORT.

OKAY— PULL HER UP TO 1000 METRES AND HEAD FOR THE HELIPORT.

PERFECT. ACK-ACK CREWS JUST ARRIVING. TAKE HER IN FOR A TOUCH, THEN...

HUG THE STREETS— GO!

WE GREASED IN AS PLANNED. WITH THE HEAVY ARTILLERY AT THE HELIPORT, THE CASTLE ONLY HAD LIGHTLY-ARMED GUARDS. THE TWINS COULD TAKE CARE OF THEM...

GOOD JOB, JUAN— NOW GET BACK TO THE HELIPORT AND WAIT.

DROP US IN OVER THE CASTLE WALL. BOLIVAR, JAMES— GET READY...

IF WE'RE LUCKY WE'LL JOIN YOU IN AN HOUR.

IF WE'RE NOT, YOU'D BETTER SEND A HEARSE TO PICK UP THE PIECES!



IT IS
FORBIDDEN
TO LAND HERE!
I COMMAND
YOU TO—

OUT OF MY WAY,
LITTLE MAN, AND
SHOW US TO THE
REGISTRATION
OFFICE—AT
ONCE!

PRESIDENT ZAPILOTE
—IN PERSON ...

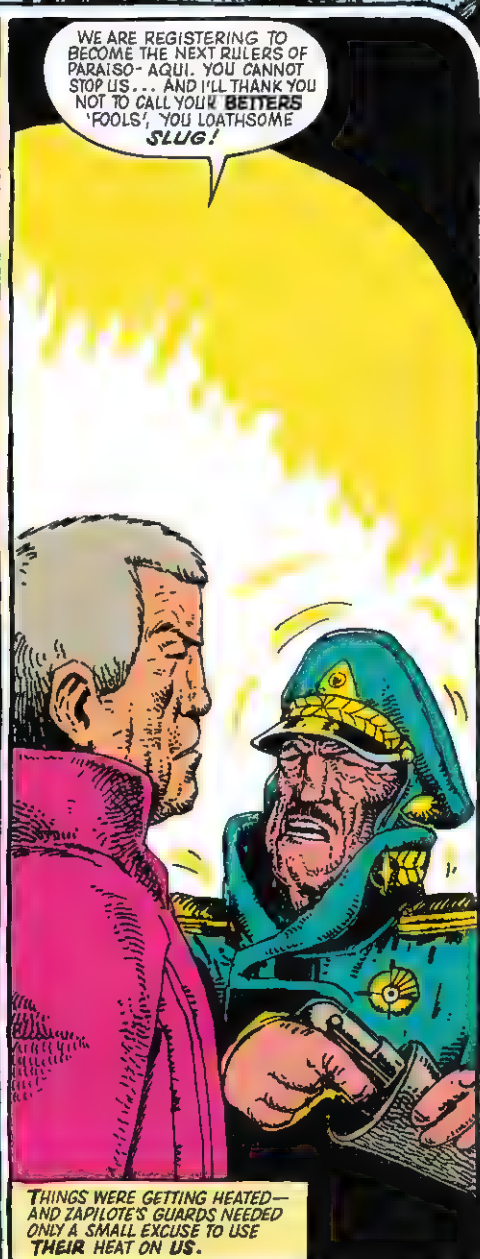


WE'D GOT THROUGH MOST OF
THE PAPER MOUNTAIN WHEN
WE WERE INTERRUPTED ...



STOP THIS!
WHAT DO YOU
FOOLS
THINK YOU'RE
DOING?

THE TYRANT OF PARAISO-AQUI
WAS 300 YEARS OLD. HE LOOKED
OLDER. THE ANTI-AGEING TREATMENT
HAD UNPLEASANT SIDE-EFFECTS.



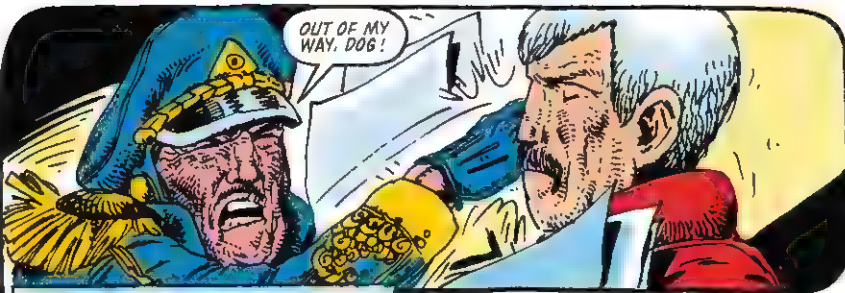
WE ARE REGISTERING TO
BECOME THE NEXT RULERS OF
PARAISO-AQUI. YOU CANNOT
STOP US ... AND I'LL THANK YOU
NOT TO CALL YOUR 'BETTERS'
'FOOLS', YOU LOATHSOME
SLUG!

THINGS WERE GETTING HEATED—
AND ZAPILOTE'S GUARDS NEEDED
ONLY A SMALL EXCUSE TO USE
THEIR HEAT ON US.



THE RAT MOVED IN...

COULD YOU HELP ME WITH THIS LAST FORM? YOU'RE THE PRESIDENT, AFTER ALL, SO YOU OUGHT TO KNOW!



OUT OF MY WAY, DOG!

HIS BLOW STRUCK ME WITH ALL THE FORCE OF A LIMP LETTUCE LEAF. ZAPILOTE, HOWEVER, WAS LESS FORTUNATE...



AAH! M-MY HAND!

OH, WELL... GUESS I'LL HAVE TO WORK IT OUT FOR MYSELF.



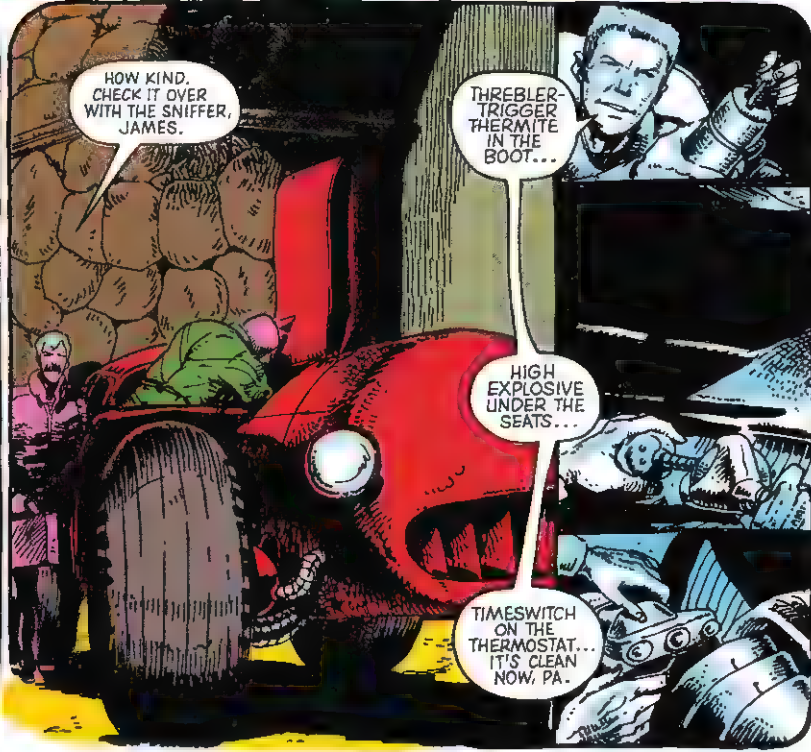
PAH! LET THEM GO! THESE MEDDLERS CAN DO ME NO HARM!



MY DIVERSION HAD WORKED OUT ALL RIGHT. ZAPILOTE KNEW IT WOULD LOOK BAD TO KNOCK OFF A COUPLE OF NOBLES IN HIS HOUSE.

OUTSIDE HIS HOUSE WAS ANOTHER MATTER...

THE ANCIENT ONE HAS KINDLY LOANED US HIS LIMO, DAD.



HOW KIND. CHECK IT OVER WITH THE SNIFFER, JAMES.

THREBLER-TRIGGER THERMITE IN THE BOOT...

HIGH EXPLOSIVE UNDER THE SEATS...

TIMESWITCH ON THE THERMOSTAT... IT'S CLEAN NOW, PA.

I PAID OFF THE DRIVER
AND BOLIVAR TOOK
THE WHEEL...

HIT THE
GAS, MY
BOY!

STEAM...
IT RUNS ON
STEAM.

GOOD
GRIEF!

WE GOT TO THE
HELIPORT IN
MINUTES...

NO GUARDS.
I DON'T LIKE
THIS, DAD.

NEITHER
DO I. BUT WE'RE
CLEAR IF WE REACH
THE CHOPPER.

I SHOULD'VE SAID "WE'RE
CLEAR IF WE REACH THE
SMOKING WRECK OF OUR
CHOPPER WITH THE DEAD
PILOT INSIDE"...

THEY HAVE KILLED
AN INNOCENT MAN—
THEY OUGHT NOT TO
HAVE DONE THIS.

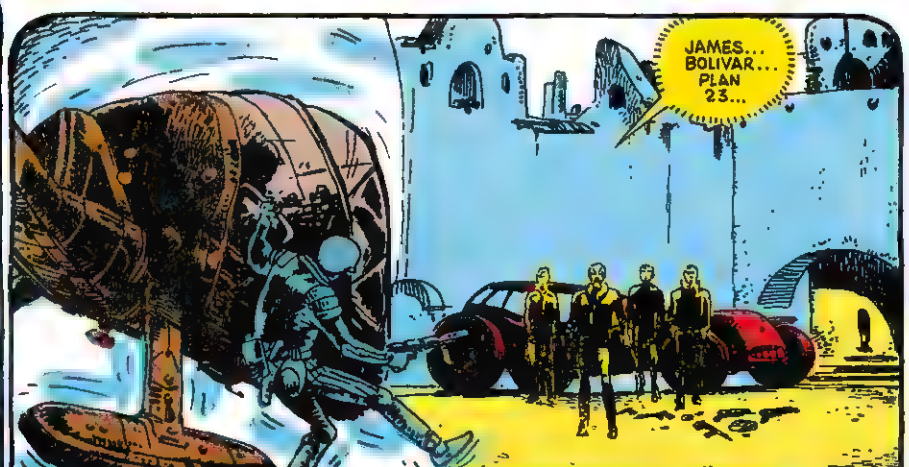
LOOKS LIKE WE'RE
NEXT, DE TORRES.
CONCEALED GUARDS
—ALL EXITS
COVERED.

WELL, AS YOUR
MOTHER WOULD
SAY... WHEN YOU
CAN'T REASON
WITH THEM...

HIT 'EM!

GO FOR THE
TERMINAL RAMP
AND OPEN FIRE!

KERRASHH!



DIVERSION
TACTIC NUMBER
TWENTY-THREE
WAS GOING FINE.

UNTIL DE TORRES
LOST HIS TEMPER...



FILTHY,
MURDERING
SWINE!

SCRAP IT, BOYS!
FULL FIREPOWER...



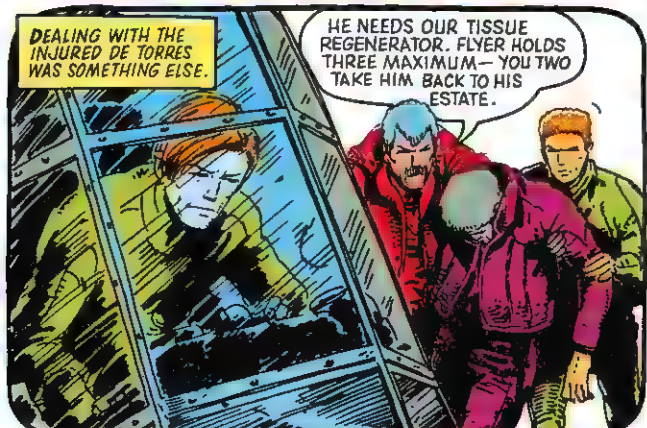
BLAM!

UUNNHHH-



THE NEEDLE GUNS
DEALT WITH THE GUARDS.

DEALING WITH THE
INJURED DE TORRES
WAS SOMETHING ELSE.



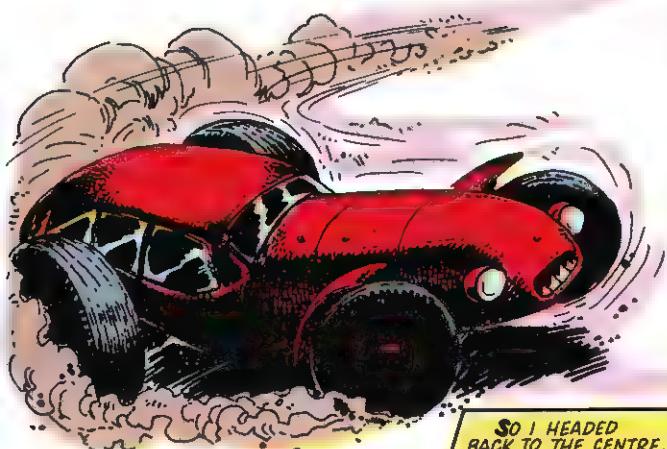
HE NEEDS OUR TISSUE
REGENERATOR. FLYER HOLDS
THREE MAXIMUM— YOU TWO
TAKE HIM BACK TO HIS
ESTATE.



KEEP THAT
CONTRAPTION
FAST AND LOW!
I'LL CATCH
UP...

RULE ONE IN A TIGHT SPOT: "DO THE UNEXPECTED."
ZAPILOTE WOULD EXPECT ME TO GET FAR AWAY FROM
THE CITY.

I PARKED IN THE TATTIEST NEIGHBOURHOOD
I COULD FIND, AND LEFT THE KEYS IN THE
IGNITION. THE LOCAL UNDERWORLD WOULD
SOON HIDE IT FOR ME...



SO I HEADED
BACK TO THE CENTRE.



RATS ALWAYS FEEL SAFE
IN THE SEEDIEST PART
OF TOWN. THAT HOLDS
GOOD FOR A STAINLESS
STEEL RODENT AS WELL—
I FELT RIGHT AT HOME...



THEY LET ME WIN FOR A WHILE, THEN THEY STARTED TO SHAKE ME DOWN. MY EXPERT EYE SPOTTED EVERY CROOKED DEAL...

THEY SAY ZAPILOTE'S GOT AN OPPONENT IN THE ELECTION!

HE WON'T STAND A CHANCE! ZAPILOTE'S OPPONENTS HAVE GOT A HABIT OF HAVING SUDDEN HEART ATTACKS...OR FATAL ACCIDENTS!

SURE. YOU DESERVE A CHANCE TO WIN SOME BACK FROM US!

PROVIDING WE DO NOT KILL YOU!

I'M CLEANED OUT, BOYS—HAVE TO BREAK INTO MY TRAVELLING MONEY.

OKAY, OKAY, I'M A CARD-SHARP...LIKE YOU, ONLY BETTER. I WAS ABOUT TO TAKE YOU FOR EVERY CRED YOU'VE GOT, LOOK—THIS IS MY NEXT HAND.

AFTER YOU'VE EXPLAINED WHY YOU HAVE THREE GUNS IN THAT CASE...

...WHICH I SEARCHED WHILE YOU WEREN'T LOOKING. TALK!

W-WHERE DID YOU PALM THOSE?

THAT'S NOTHING! IF YOU THINK THEY'RE GOOD, SEE WHAT I'VE GOT HERE...

IT'S DYNAMITE!

DROP THE CANNON, ADOLFO. YOUR FRIENDS ARE UNHARMED — THEY'LL JUST HAVE BIG HANGOVERS WHEN THEY COME ROUND.

WHO ARE YOU? WHAT DO YOU WANT FROM US?

I GAVE ADOLFO THE NEEDLE GUN ANTIDOTE AND STARTED TO EXPLAIN...

I AM, FIRST AND FOREMOST, A **CROOK**. I'M ALSO THE GUY WHO IS GOING TO **BEAT ZAPILOTE** IN THE ELECTION.

THEN WHY NOT JOIN ME? I NEED PEOPLE WHO CAN RUN RINGS ROUND ZAPILOTE'S POLICE—AND I PAY WELL, TOO!

HMMM... AT LEAST WE'D GET TO EAT REGULARLY, AND THE RISKS WOULD BE NO WORSE THAN THEY ARE NOW...

I WISH YOU LUCK, JIM. ZAPILOTE'S THUGS KEEP ALL THE RACKETS TO THEMSELVES. US ORDINARY CROOKS CAN'T MAKE A DISHONEST LIVING ANY MORE!

GOOD. YOU ARE HEREBY RECRUITED TO THE **NOBLES, WORKERS AND PEASANTS PARTY**. GO INTO THE TOURIST AREA AND HIRE ME A **STADIUM**. THIS SHOULD COVER THE BRIBES.

IN THAT CASE, I WILL INTRODUCE YOU TO THE GENTLE ART OF **ARMED ROBBERY**. LEAD ME TO THE NEAREST **ZAPILOTE BANK**...

KNOCKING OVER THE BANK WAS SIMPLE. **PARAISO-AQUI** HADN'T HAD A HEIST FOR 50 YEARS—EVERYONE WAS OUT OF PRACTICE...

W-WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

WE'LL NEED A LOT OF DOUGH, JIM. MORE THAN THIS...

ROBBING YOUR BANK... STAND ASIDE, PLEASE—MY ASSOCIATE WOULD LIKE TO BLOW YOUR SCREEN TO PIECES!

FADAMM!

OF COURSE, OUR BEHAVIOUR WAS INEXCUSABLE. A SAFE SHOULD BE TEASED OPEN WITH EXPERT FINGERS, NOT CRUDELY BLOWN APART. BUT WE DIDN'T HAVE TIME FOR STYLE.



WONDERFUL!
WHAT DO WE DO
NEXT— ANOTHER
BANK? A TAX
OFFICE?

NOTHING
SO EXCITING,
FRIENDS. I NEED
TO GET A MESSAGE
TO A CASTLE OUTSIDE
THE CITY— HOW?

SEND IT FROM A CASTLE **INSIDE** THE CITY.
A FEW NOBLES ARE STILL HERE, AND THEY'VE
ALL GOT THE OLD SEMAPHORE TELEGRAPH.
ZAPILOTE GUARDS THE CASTLES HERE,
THOUGH...

ALL PART
OF THE FUN—
FIND ME A
CASTLE!

BAM!
SCREEEE!

MEANWHILE, ZAPILOTE HAD HEARD ABOUT OUR DARING DEEDS

FIRST THEY ESCAPE— NOW
THEY ROB ONE OF MY BANKS!
I WANT THEM, OLIVEIRA...
I WANT THEM KILLED OVER AND
OVER AGAIN! **FIND THEM!**

YES, YOUR
EXCELLENCY!
AT ONCE!

NO! NO!
I KNOW
NOTHING!

HIS GOONS STEPPED UP THEIR
TERROR TACTICS IMMEDIATELY.
ANYONE SUSPECTED OF EVEN
THINKING BAD THINGS WAS TAKEN...



... TORTURED ...

AAAAAAAAAAAA!

... OR
SHOT
TRYING TO
ESCAPE!



BAKKA!

BAKKA!

AAHH!

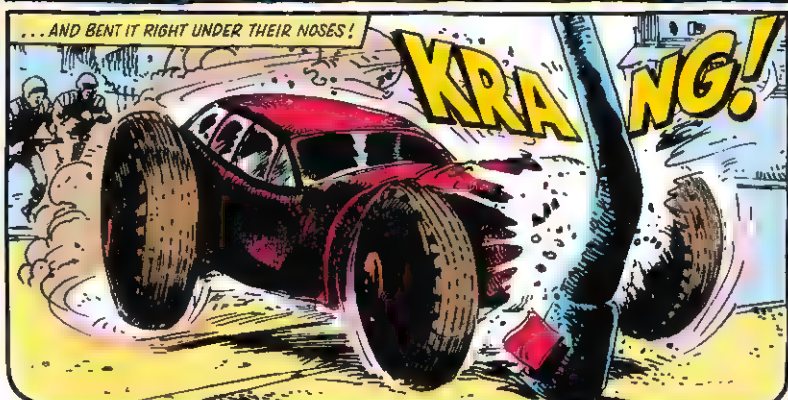
MY FACE WAS TOO WELL-KNOWN TO GET PAST THE CASTLE GUARDS ... BUT RENATA MANAGED TO SLIP A MESSAGE INSIDE ...



THEN WE HIT STAGE TWO: ADOLFO SLAMMED THE CAR ROUND THE CORNER ...



... AND BENT IT RIGHT UNDER THEIR NOSES!



WHICH LEFT STAGE THREE: I SIMPLY HAD TO WALK THROUGH THE DOOR WHICH RENATA HAD TOLD THEM TO UNLOCK. BUT ...



NOW, I'M PRETTY GOOD WITH LOCKS - BUT THIS ONE WAS NEW TO ME, AND I HAD ALL OF TWO SECONDS TO PICK IT BEFORE I WAS SPOTTED ...

IF I FAILED, THE DOOR WOULD BE TURNING RED WHEN THEY BLASTED ME ALL OVER IT!



BASED ON THE

BOOK BY HARRY HARRISON © HARRY HARRISON 1982

The Stainless Steel Rat



FOR PRESIDENT

— PART TWO —

PRESIDENT ZAPILOTE OF PARAISO-AQUI FELT THREATENED. HE KNEW I WAS RUNNING AGAINST HIM IN THE ELECTION — AND LIKE YOUR AVERAGE VICIOUS RULER HE REACTED WITH VIOLENCE, KILLING AND TORTURING IN HIS EFFORTS TO TRACK ME DOWN...

FIND HIM!
FIND THAT
MEDDLING
FOOL!

WE THOUGHT I WAS HARMLESS
HECTOR HARAPD. IF HE'D KNOWN
I WAS REALLY THE GALAXY'S TOP
CRIMINAL MASTERMIND, GOODNESS
KNOWS WHAT HE'D HAVE DONE!

AT THIS MOMENT, THE
OLD MASTERMIND COULDN'T
EVEN PICK A SIMPLE LOCK...

COME ON...
COME ON!

UNHH...

WELCOME TO
CASTLE PENOSO,
SIR HECTOR.

THANKS! YOU'VE SAVED MY LIFE!

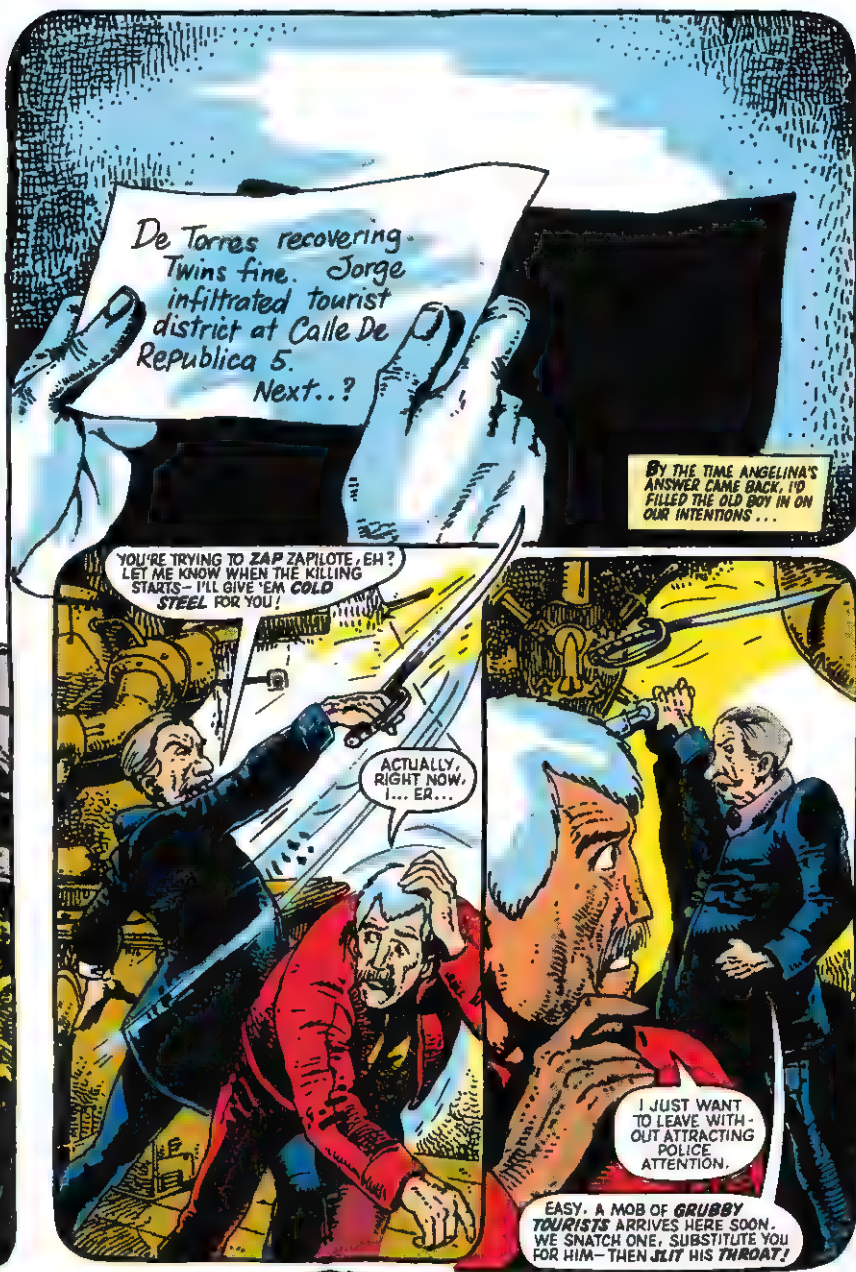
I MERELY OPENED
THE DOOR, AS YOUR NOTE
REQUESTED. PLEASE GET
UP OFF MY FLOOR, AND TELL
ME WHAT YOU WANT...

ADAPTATION:
KELVIN GOSNELL

ART:
CARLOS EZQUERRA

LETTERING:
JACK POTTER

COLOR:
JANET LANDAU



I SOON SAW MY TARGET— MY HEIGHT
AND BUILD, AND ALL BY HIMSELF...

EXCUSE
ME, SIR.
THE DUKE OF
PENOSO
REQUESTS
A PRIVATE
AUDIENCE
WITH YOU!

WITH ME?
A REAL DOOK?
LEADON, PAL!

PLEASE
—AFTER
YOU...

THUD!

GEE! WHAT AN
INNERESSING GUY,
THAT DOOK!

SAY, I AIN'T SEEN
YOU BEFORE...

WHAT A
COINCIDENCE...

I AIN'T SEEN YOU NEITHER!
WHAT D'YA SAY TO A BITE TO
EAT BACK AT THE HOTEL?

LATER, I WENT
FOR A WALK
PAST JORGE'S
NEW HIDEOUT
I WASN'T HIS
FIRST VISITOR...

DON'T LIKE
THE LOOK OF
THIS...

MY FEARS WERE
SOON REALISED.
I WENT INTO
ACTION...

THE GOONS COUNTED US OUT TO THE
BUS. ONCE AGAIN, THE STAINLESS
STEEL RAT HAD SLIPPED THROUGH
THEIR HANDS!

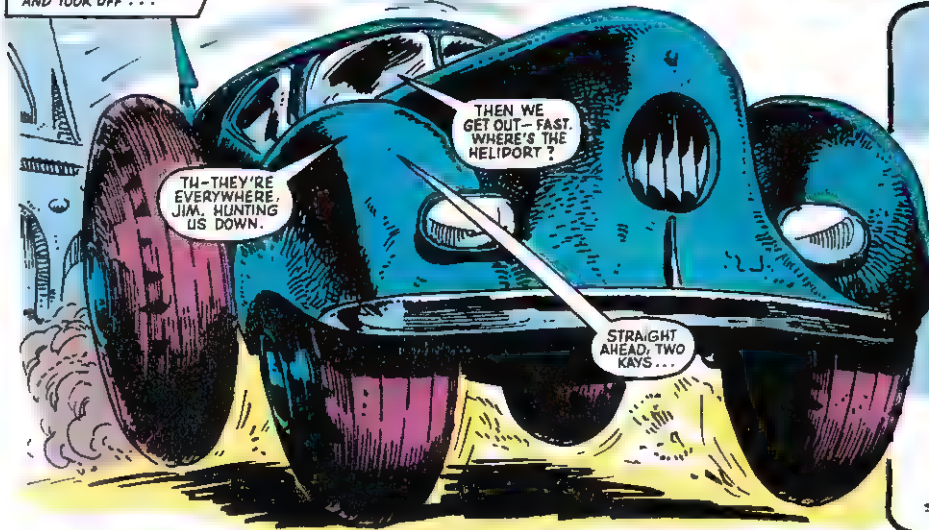
THERE'SSH
AN OL' DROID
BY THE SHTEAM,
NELLIEE
DEEEN!



ANTI-SOCIAL, HUH?



I BUNDLED MY GROGGY FRIEND INTO THEIR CAR AND TOOK OFF...





SOON...

YOU REALISE Z-ZAPILOTE WILL MURDER ME WHEN I RETURN?

SO DON'T RETURN. DE TORRES NEEDS A NEW PILOT— HE'S A GOOD EMPLOYER, TOO.



NICE TO BE BACK. SIGN UP THE PILOT, THEN SHOW ME THE RESULT OF OUR LABOUR TO DATE!

YOU BET, DAD!



MY LOVELY WIFE HAD BEEN RUMMAGING THROUGH THE CASTLE'S EXTENSIVE LIBRARY...

I RAN A SEARCH PROGRAM ON ELECTION-RIGGING THROUGH ALL STORAGE SYSTEMS... I GOT ZERO!

THEN BOLIVAR FOUND THIS ANTIGUE BOOK THING...

PLENTY OF DISAPPROVING REFERENCES, BUT NO GUIDE BOOKS ON HOW IT'S DONE!



THE GUY WHO WROTE IT WAS A GENIUS, JIM. IT'S CRAMMED FULL OF THE **CROOKEDEST** POLITICAL SCHEMES I'VE EVER HEARD OF!



I SKIMMED THROUGH THE BOOK THING— AND I HAD TO AGREE WITH ANGELINA...

A TOAST, MY FRIENDS! TO THE **TWO MEN** WHO WILL ENSURE WE WIN THE PARAISO-AQUI ELECTION! I GIVE YOU **SAM FOX**...

WHO'S THE OTHER ONE, DAD?



PRESIDENT JULIO ZAPIOTE!



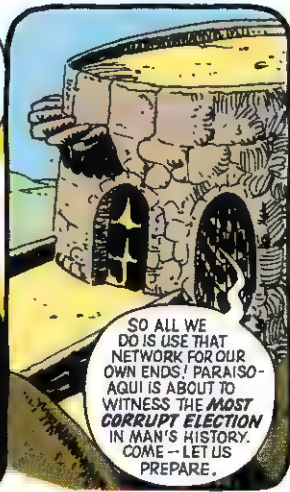
WHAT? ZAPILOTE
WILL HELP US WIN
THE ELECTION?

HE'S THE CURRENT
PRESIDENT, PA! HE
WANTS US DEAD!

OH YE OF
LITTLE FAITH!



ZAPILOTE IS AN **ACE** ELECTION
RIGGER. HE CONTROLS THE COM-
PUTERISED POLLING BOOTHS, THE
NEWSPAPERS AND THE TV FROM A
CENTRAL COMMAND POST—A HUGE
NET OF **ELECTRONIC CORRUPTION!**



SO ALL WE
DO IS USE THAT
NETWORK FOR OUR
OWN ENDS! PARAISO-
AQUI IS ABOUT TO
WITNESS THE **MOST
CORRUPT ELECTION**
IN MAN'S HISTORY.
COME—LET US
PREPARE.

THE NEXT FEW DAYS WERE HECTIC: SPEECHES WERE WRITTEN,
HARDWARE WAS DESIGNED AND BUILT. EVENTUALLY WE WERE
READY TO SET OFF FOR OUR FIRST CAMPAIGN RALLY...



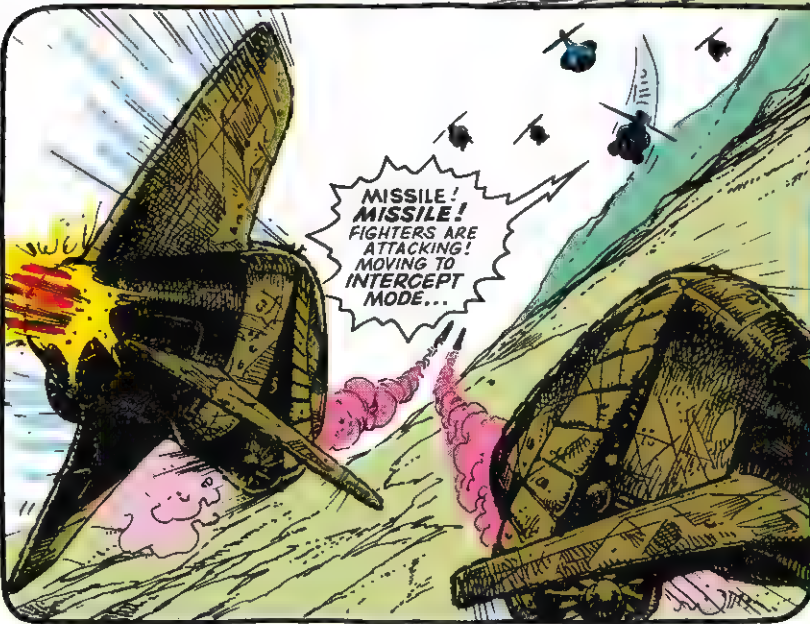
SCANNERS TO
MAXIMUM RANGE,
JAMES. IT'S A DEAD
CERT ZAPILOTE'S
GOONS WILL
ATTACK US!

RIGHT, DAD.
HAVE A GOOD
FLIGHT...

WE HAD TO GO BY AIR— AT LEAST
THAT WAY YOU CAN SEE THE BAD
GUYS COMING AT YOU.
AND COME THEY DID...



I HAVE TWO
CONTACTS. RANGE
10 K'S. CLOSING AT
MACH 2— I.R.
EMISSIONS DENOTE
FIGHTERS!



MISSILE!
MISSILE!
FIGHTERS ARE
ATTACKING!
MOVING TO
INTERCEPT
MODE...



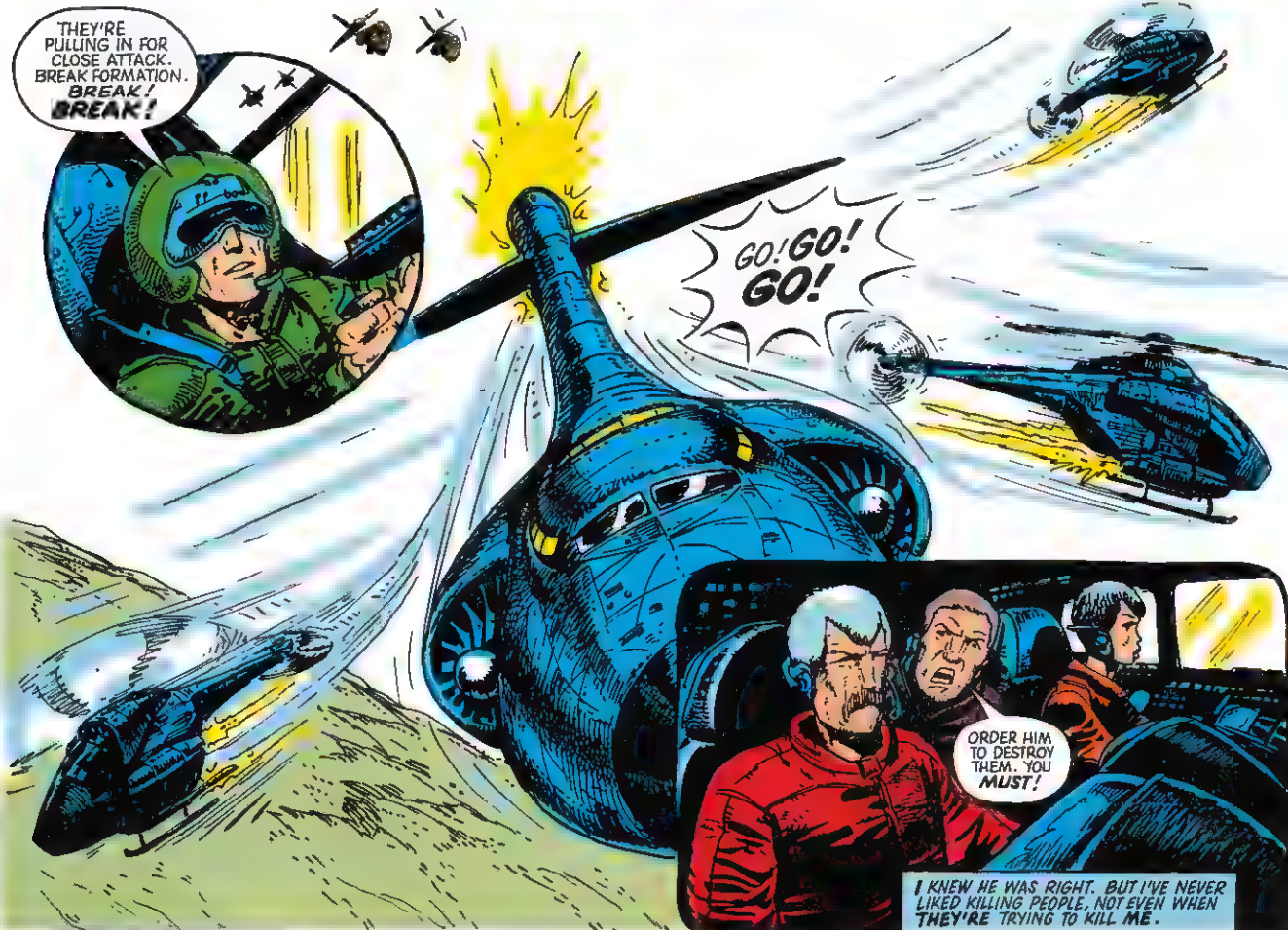
JAMES' RADAR-GUIDED CANNON
FIRED 5000 ROUNDS PER MINUTE.
A HALF-SECOND BURST
WAS ENOUGH...

SHRAMM!

SCRATCH
TWO
MISSILES!



THEY'RE
PULLING IN FOR
CLOSE ATTACK.
BREAK FORMATION.
**BREAK!
BREAK!**



**GO! GO!
GO!**



ORDER HIM
TO DESTROY
THEM. YOU
MUST!

I KNEW HE WAS RIGHT. BUT I'VE NEVER
LIKED KILLING PEOPLE, NOT EVEN WHEN
THEY'RE TRYING TO KILL ME.

THEY WENT FOR
JAMES IN THEIR
SECOND PASS.

THIS IS
ESCORT ONE.
I'M TAKING
FIRE DAMAGE--
WOULDN'T SURVIVE
ANOTHER
PASS.

JAMES REACTED INSTINCTIVELY
WHEN DE TORRES SCREAMED
INTO HIS HEADSET...

ARM
AND FIRE!
BLOW THEM
OUT OF THE
SKY!

MISSILES
LAUNCHED AND
TRACKING!

VA-DOOM!

TARGETS
DESTROYED.

WE KNEW ZAPILOTE WOULD BE GUNNING FOR
US ON THE GROUND, TOO, SO WE HELD THE RALLY
IN THE TOURIST DISTRICT-- HE COULDN'T HIT US
IN FORCE HERE WITHOUT RUINING HIS MAIN
SOURCE OF INCOME...

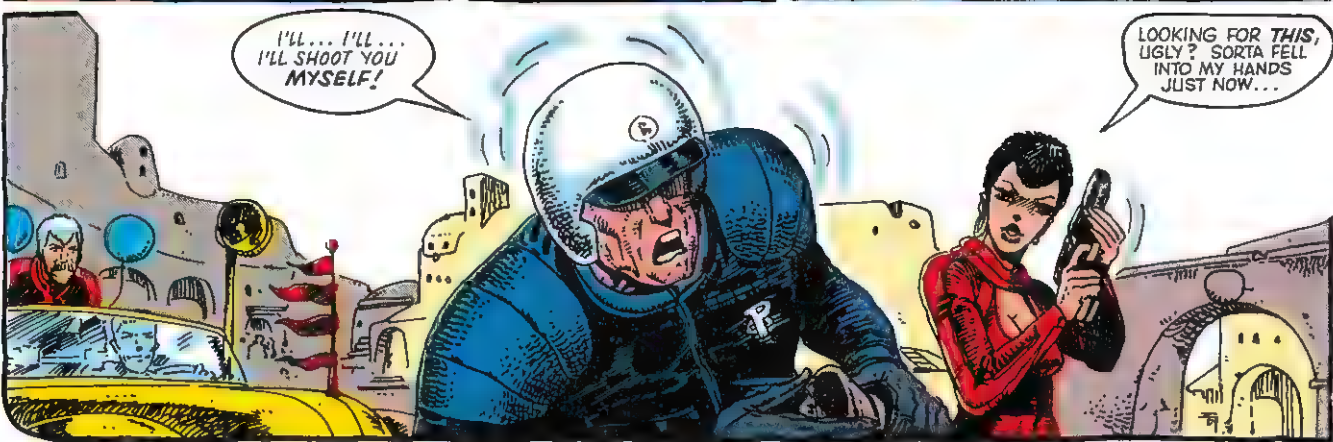
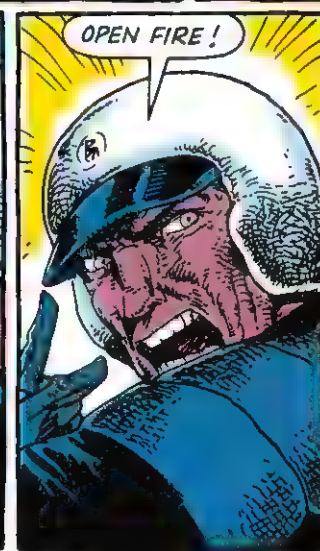
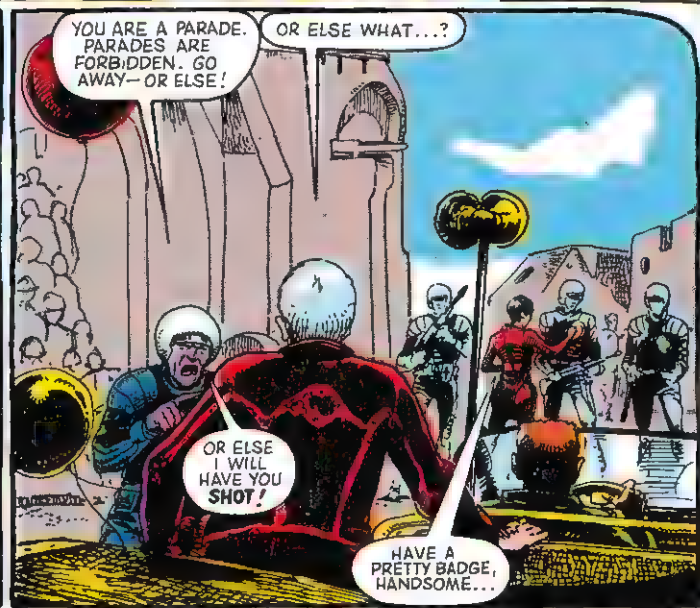
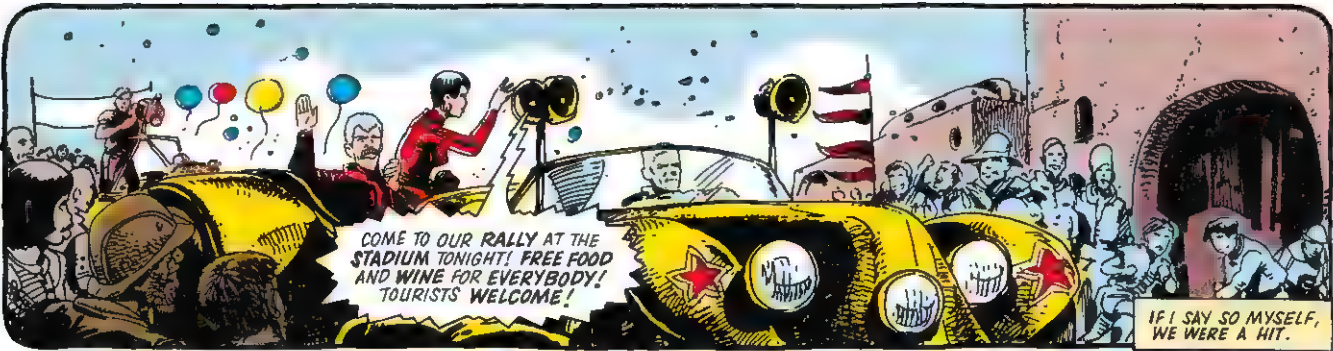
VERY WELL.
RESUME
FORMATION.
LET'S GET THIS
HELLISH JOURNEY
OVER BEFORE WE
HAVE TO KILL
ANYONE ELSE.

AND SO, TO STIRRING MARTIAL
MUSIC, WE ENTERED THE TOWN...

OKAY, WE'RE
ALL READY.
LET'S GET
THIS CIRCUS
ROLLING.

GLORY GLORY TO THE WORKERS!
GLORY GLORY TO THE PEASANTS!
DOWN WITH ZAPILOTE'S BULLIES!
HARAPO GOES MARCHING ON!
ON! ON!

I PROMISE YOU A
NEW DAWN ON PARAISO-
AQUI. A DAY OF EVERLASTING
SUNLIGHT FOR YOU AND
YOUR LITTLE ONES...





...HOW'S IT WORK, OFFICER? IS THIS ITTY BITTY THING THE TRIGGER?

P- PLEASE! PLEASE!



HELP!

HA! LOOK AT THE BUZZARD GO!

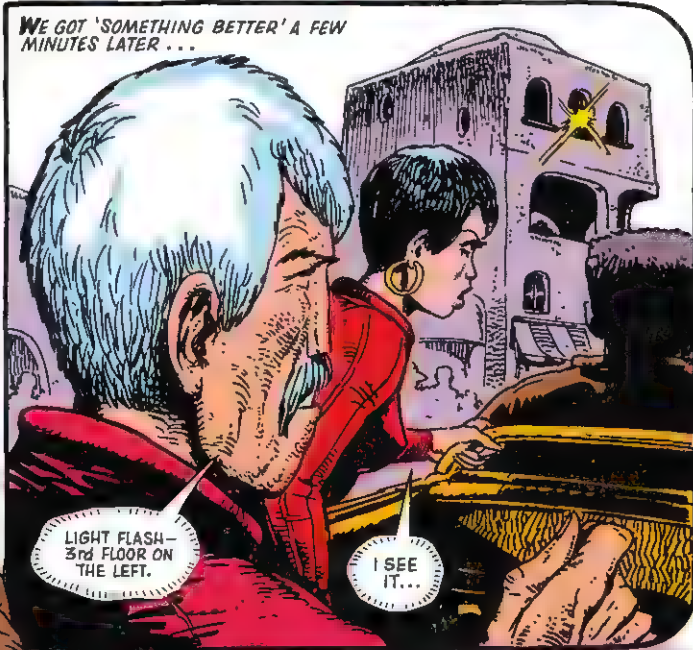
THIS HARAPO- I THINK HE KNOWS WHAT HE'S DOING!

GIVES AWAY FREE WINE TOO!



GOT IT ALL ON TAPE, SIR HECTOR. WANT ME TO EDIT IT NOW?

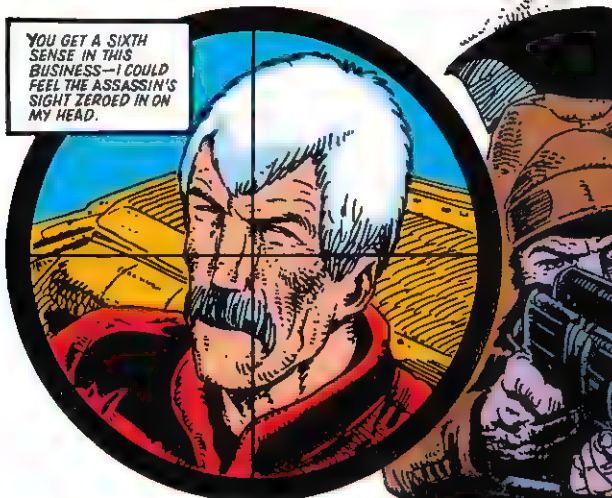
NO, KEEP IT ROLLING- WE MIGHT GET SOMETHING BETTER.



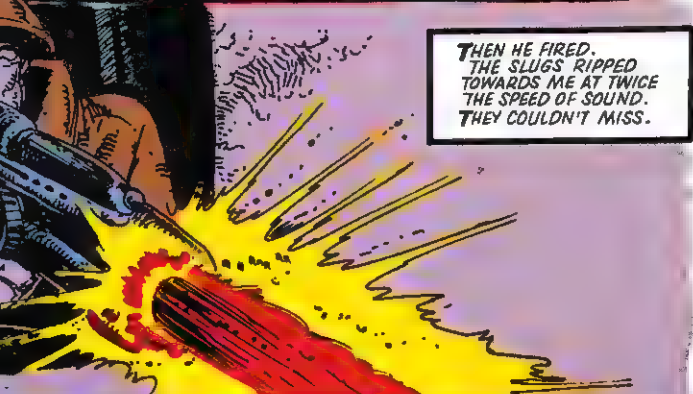
WE GOT 'SOMETHING BETTER' A FEW MINUTES LATER ...

LIGHT FLASH- 3rd FLOOR ON THE LEFT.

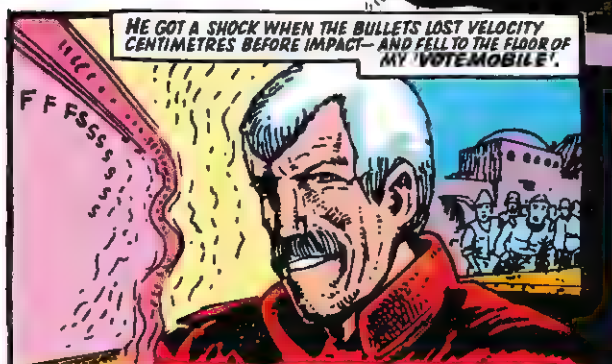
I SEE IT...



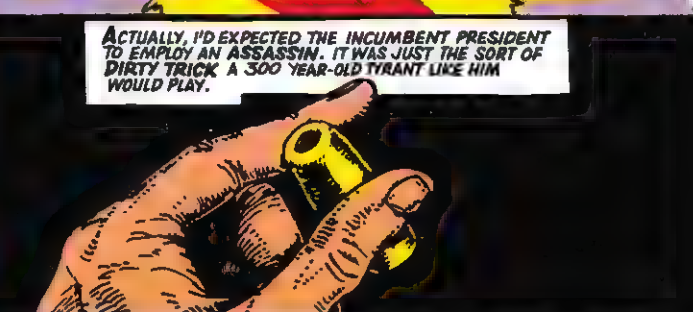
YOU GET A SIXTH SENSE IN THIS BUSINESS- I COULD FEEL THE ASSASSIN'S SIGHT ZEROED IN ON MY HEAD.



THEN HE FIRED. THE SLUGS RIPPED TOWARDS ME AT TWICE THE SPEED OF SOUND. THEY COULDN'T MISS.



HE GOT A SHOCK WHEN THE BULLETS LOST VELOCITY CENTIMETRES BEFORE IMPACT- AND FELL TO THE FLOOR OF MY 'VOTEMOBILE'.



ACTUALLY, I'D EXPECTED THE INCUMBENT PRESIDENT TO EMPLOY AN ASSASSIN. IT WAS JUST THE SORT OF DIRTY TRICK A 300 YEAR-OLD TYRANT LIKE HIM WOULD PLAY.

A STADIUM FOR THE RALLY
HAD BEEN HIRED BY ADOLPHO
AND HIS CARD-SHARPING
FRIENDS. I'D RECRUITED THEM
A FEW DAYS EARLIER.

27

EVERYTHING'S GOING TO PLAN,
ER, SIR HECTOR. WE HAD A LITTLE
PROBLEM WITH THE SECURITY POLICE
TRYING TO FRIGHTEN THE VOTERS AWAY...

BUT WE 'PERSUADED'
THEM TO BECOME A
WARM-UP ACT
INSTEAD!

SPLUDGE!

SPLITCH!!

SMACK!

THE CROWD WERE BROUGHT TO FEVER
PITCH, AND THEN I MADE MY ENTRY.

RAAAAAAAAAAAAA!

YOU GONNA
VOTE FOR SIR
HECTOR?

S'LONG AS HE
KEEPS DISHING
OUT THIS FREE
DRINK!

CITIZENS OF PARAISO-AQUI!
WE OF THE NOBLES, PEASANTS
AND WORKERS' PARTY ARE GOING
TO RID YOU OF THE EVIL
TYRANT ZAPILOTE!

BANISH
HIM!

END THE
OPPRESSION!

MY SPEECH WASN'T THAT GOOD—IT WAS
HELPED BY THE SUBSONIC SYSTEM WE'D
INSTALLED...

STOP THE FORCED
LABOUR!

DISBAND THE
SECRET
POLICE!

WHICH PENETRATED THE CROWD'S
NERVOUS SYSTEM AND STIMULATED
THEIR EMOTIONS.

WE WILL
MAKE YOU FREE
AND HAPPY!

ANGER DEPRES-
SION HAPPY

ANGER DEPRES-
SION HAPPY

'RAAAAAAY!

I KEPT SOCKING IT TO THEM FOR AN HOUR, SHOWING THEM THE ASSASSINATION TAPE AND PROMISING THEM EVERYTHING THEY WANTED. THEY WENT HOME HAPPY—AND ON MY SIDE.

AND ZAPILOTE CONTROLS THE MEDIA, RIGHT?

OR RATHER, HE DID...!

ONE RALLY WILL NOT WIN AN ELECTION, d:GRIZ. YOU NEED **TELEVISION EXPOSURE** TO REACH ALL THE VOTERS!

AND THAT, GENTLE READER, IS HOW WE SET OUT TO STEAL A VERY SPECIAL SPACESHIP... THE ONE USED BY ZAPILOTE TO SERVICE HIS COMMUNICATIONS SATELLITES!

THE SHIP'S CAPTAIN WAS ABOUT TO TAKE HER UP ON A ROUTINE FLIGHT TO SERVICE THE COMSATS...

I HAVE A QUARANTINE ORDER ON YOUR SHIP! ONE OF YOUR CREW IS INFECTED WITH **PERROTONITIS**!

PERROWHAT?

A RARE DISEASE WHICH MAKES THE VICTIM ACT LIKE A **DOG**!

WE DID... UNTIL ANGELINA INFECTED HIM WITH A THROAT SWAB!

OPEN THE GATES! THIS IS A **MEDICAL EMERGENCY**!

THIS IS THE ONE, DOCTOR!

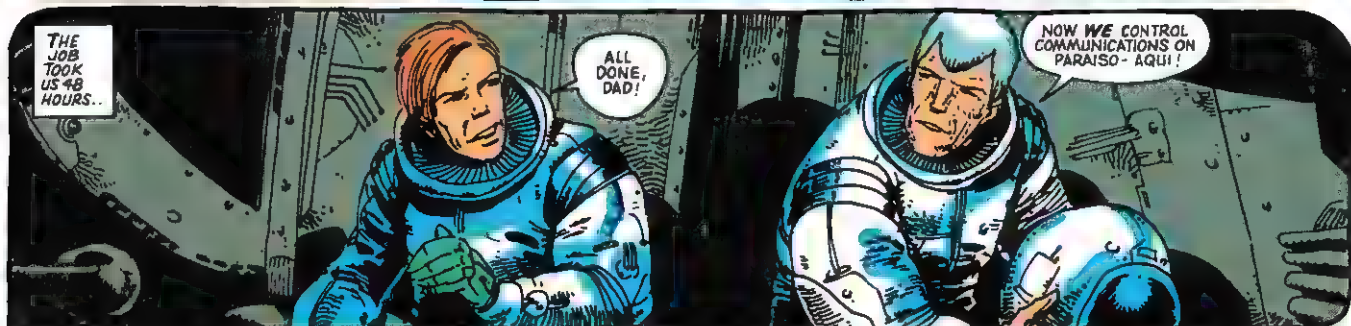
M-ME? BUT I F-FEEL FINE!

HE'S BITING MY LEG!

A CLASSIC CASE. BETTER CHECK THE REST OF THE CREW, NURSE!

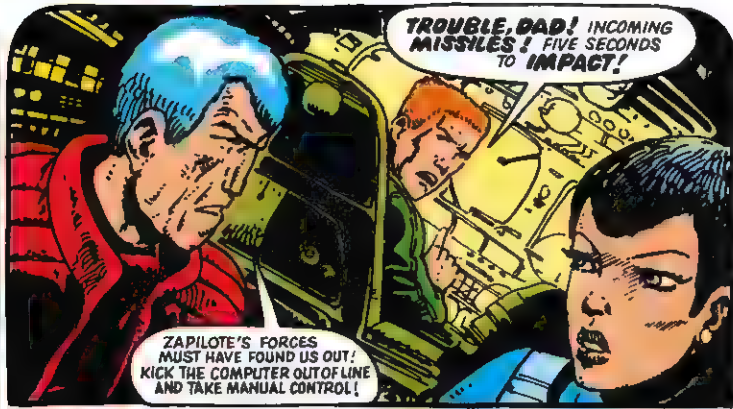
GRRRRRRR!

ULP!



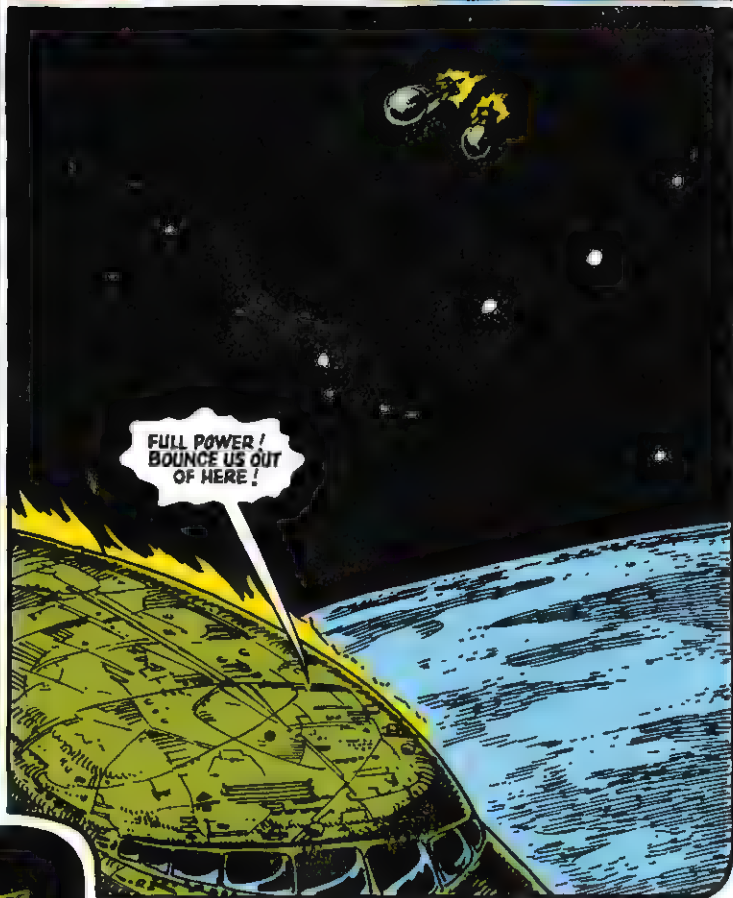


RE-ENTRY THRUST
COMPLETED. COMM-
BLACKOUT IN TEN
SECONDS.



TRouble, DAD! INCOMING
MISSILES! FIVE SECONDS
TO IMPACT!

ZAPILOTE'S FORCES
MUST HAVE FOUND US OUT!
KICK THE COMPUTER OUT OF LINE
AND TAKE MANUAL CONTROL!



FULL POWER!
BOUNCE US OUT
OF HERE!



JAMES IS A GOOD PILOT—
THE BEST. BUT EVEN THE
BEST STANDS NO CHANCE
AGAINST A CLOSE BURST
FROM A NUCLEAR
WARHEAD.

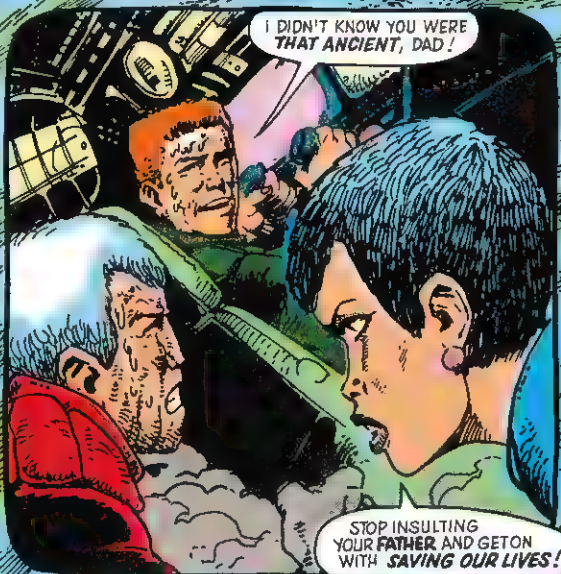


POWER'S
GONE, DAD!
NO THRUSTERS!
NO GRAVITY—NOTHING!
OUR ORBITS DECAYING TO
AND WE'RE GOING TO
HIT ATMOSPHERE
AT MACH 223!



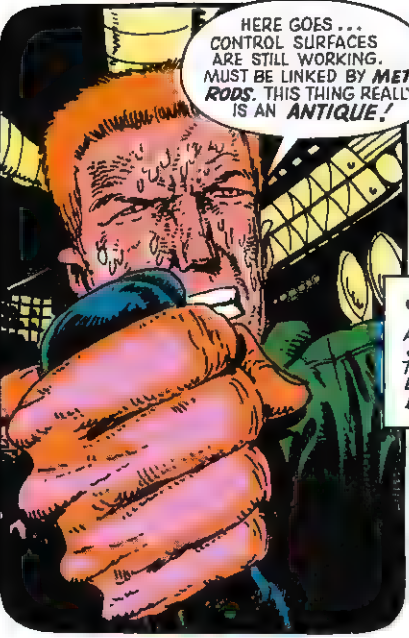
THIS RUSTBUCKET IS SO OLD,
IT'S ACTUALLY GOT **WINGS**.
WE CAN **GLIDE** DOWN!

MANUAL
AERODYNAMIC
RE-ENTRY? THAT
HASN'T BEEN DONE
FOR **CENTURIES!**



I DIDN'T KNOW YOU WERE
THAT ANCIENT, DAD!

STOP INSULTING
YOUR **FATHER**, AND GET ON
WITH **SAVING OUR LIVES!**



HERE GOES...
CONTROL SURFACES
ARE STILL WORKING.
MUST BE LINKED BY METAL
RODS. THIS THING REALLY
IS AN **ANTIQUE!**

JAMES
MADE
A GOOD
JOB OF
THE RE-
ENTRY.
BUT...



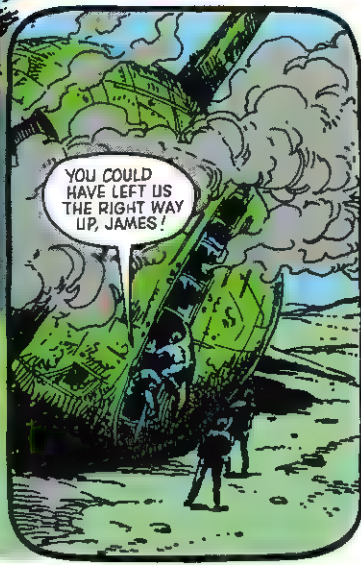
RATS!
THERE GO
THE ELEVONS.
TOUCHDOWN'S
ON **RUDDER**
ONLY...

**GOTTA FIND
SOMETHING LONG
AND STRAIGHT
TO LAND ON!**




SKKRUNNING!

**THE ONLY
SOMETHING
LONG AND
STRAIGHT
ENOUGH WAS
THE ROAD
LEADING TO
THE CAPITAL
CITY.**



YOU COULD
HAVE LEFT US
THE RIGHT WAY
UP, JAMES!



HE DID FINE.
NOW STOP CARPING
AND HELP ME GET THE
CAPTAIN OUT!

**WHAT? AFTER HIS
STUPID SPACESHIP
NEARLY KILLED US?**

IF WE HADN'T **STOLEN** HIS STUPID SPACESHIP IN THE FIRST PLACE, WE WOULDN'T HAVE **BEEN** ENDANGERED!

WE'D GOT THE LUCKLESS SAP OUT OF THE WRECK WHEN THE BAD GUYS APPEARED ...

ZAPILOTE'S GORILLAS! THEY'LL BLAST EVERYTHING IN SIGHT!

NONSENSE, DEAR. WE MUST MERELY TAKE THE INITIATIVE...

GOOD MORNING. LAY DOWN YOUR ARMS AND YOU WILL NOT BE HURT. THEN PERHAPS WE CAN DISCUSS THE SALE OF THIS EXCELLENT SECOND-HAND SPACECRAFT!

WE'D HAD TIME TO GET INTO POSITION AND OUR CROSSFIRE STITCHED 'EM UP.

KILL HIM!

RETURN FIRE!

AAARGH!

AIIEEE!

UNFORTUNATELY NEEDLE GUNS CAN'T DO MUCH DAMAGE TO A TANK.

IT'S KNOCKING THE HELL OUT OF US. WHAT NOW, MASTERMIND?

NO SWEAT—WE GO TO STAGE TWO.

I ONLY HAD ONE SMOKE GRENADE
BUT IT DID THE TRICK . . .

SPLIT UP!
STEAL ANYTHING
THAT MOVES AND
MEET BACK AT
THE CASTLE!

ANGELINA, OF COURSE, GOT BACK
FIRST— SHE'D STOLEN THE TANK!

ONE LOOK AT
ANGELINA
TOLD ME HE
WASN'T HERE.

YOU COULD
HAVE OFFERED ME
A LIFT— THIS FOUR-
LEGGED THING WAS
MOST UNCOMFOR-
TABLE! WHERE'S
BOLIVAR?

HE WASN'T.
AS DE TORRES
CONFIRMED...

I AM *SORRY* MY FRIEND.
MY SPIES BROUGHT NEWS. YOUR
SON IS IN THE CENTRAL JAIL.

THEN HE IS AS SURE
AS HELL GOING TO
BE *OUT* OF THE
CENTRAL JAIL—
AND FAST!

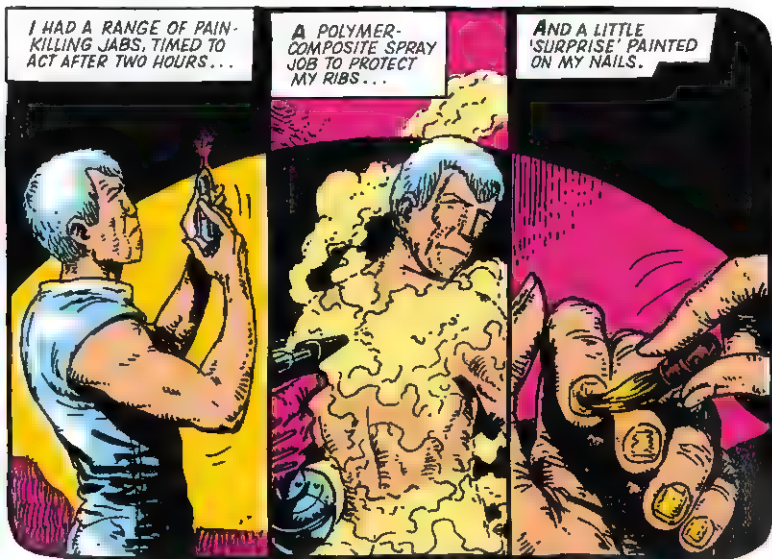
QUICK THINKING AND LOW
CUNNING ARE THE CHIEF
VIRTUES OF A STAINLESS STEEL
RAT. THE PLAN I FORMULATED
REQUIRED LOTS OF BOTH. IT
ALSO NEEDED A MULTITUDE
OF MEDICAL SUPPLIES...

I HAD A RANGE OF PAIN-KILLING JABS, TIMED TO ACT AFTER TWO HOURS...

A POLYMER-COMPOSITE SPRAY JOB TO PROTECT MY RIBS...

AND A LITTLE 'SURPRISE' PAINTED ON MY NAILS.

WE WERE GETTING EXPERT AT SNEAKING IN UNDER THE RADAR GUARDING THE CITY. I GREASED IN TO ZAPILOTE'S CASTLE TWO HOURS LATER.

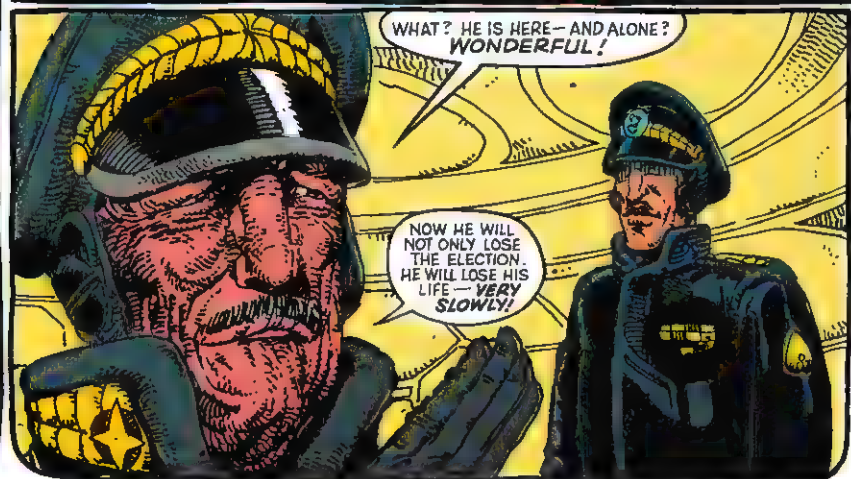


GET BACK HERE IN EXACTLY 24 HOURS.



WHERE'S YOUR PASS?

I NEED NO PASS, MORON. JUST TELL THE PIG ZAPILOTE THAT SIR HECTOR HARAPO IS HERE!



WHAT? HE IS HERE—AND ALONE? WONDERFUL!

NOW HE WILL NOT ONLY LOSE THE ELECTION. HE WILL LOSE HIS LIFE—VERY SLOWLY!

FIRST, THEY SEARCHED, BODY-SCANNED AND PURGED ME TO MAKE SURE I HAD NO WEAPONS.

THEN THE TORTURE STARTED. IT WAS PRETTY UNIMAGINATIVE...

TALK, DOG!

WOOF! WOOF!

...SO THE EARTHMAN SAID: "YEAH, BUT LOOK AT THAT GREAT SPACESUIT!" GEDDIT?

NO, NO! YOU SHOULD BE SCREAMING IN AGONY!

HE'S CLEAN

THEY DIDN'T KNOW I HAD MORE PAINKILLERS THAN BLOOD IN MY VEINS.

I GIVE UP! SOB!

GOOD. NOW THE NASTY GAME IS OVER, I'D LIKE TO SEE ZAPILOTE.

I'LL KILL YOU FIRST!

GO AHEAD — BUT YOU'LL
BE THE *NEXT ONE* TO DIE
IF I DON'T DELIVER MY
MESSAGE.

FUNNY THING ABOUT BULLIES—
THEY LOSE INTEREST IF YOU DON'T
SUFFER. THEY ALSO DO AS YOU SAY
IF THEY KNOW YOU MEAN BUSINESS.

SPEAK, OAF. GIVE YOUR
MESSAGE AND THEN I
WILL DANGLE YOU BY YOUR
OWN ENTRAILS!

THERE'S A
PLAN TO KILL YOU!

WHAT!
WHO? TELL ME
WHO PLANS IT.
NOW!

SOMEONE VERY
CLOSE TO YOU. IT IS
...MRMTRABLE!

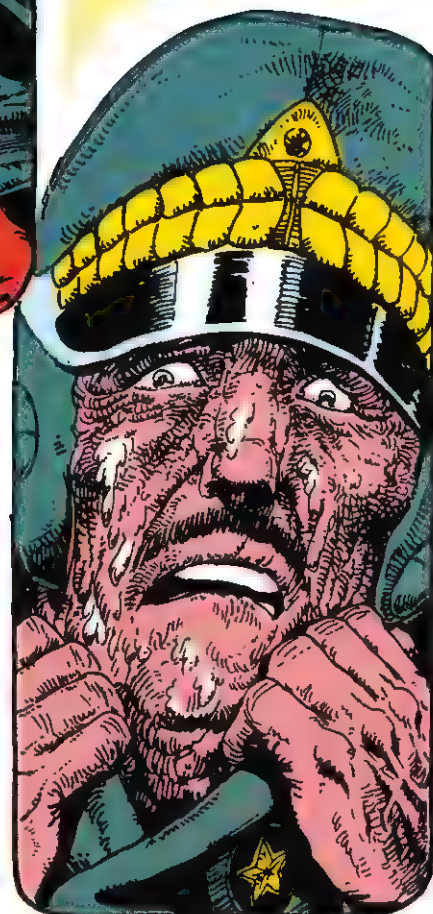
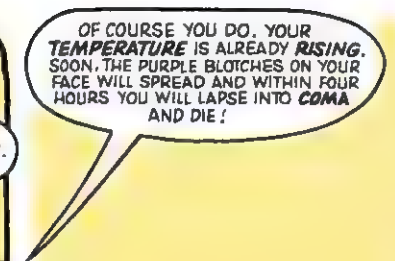
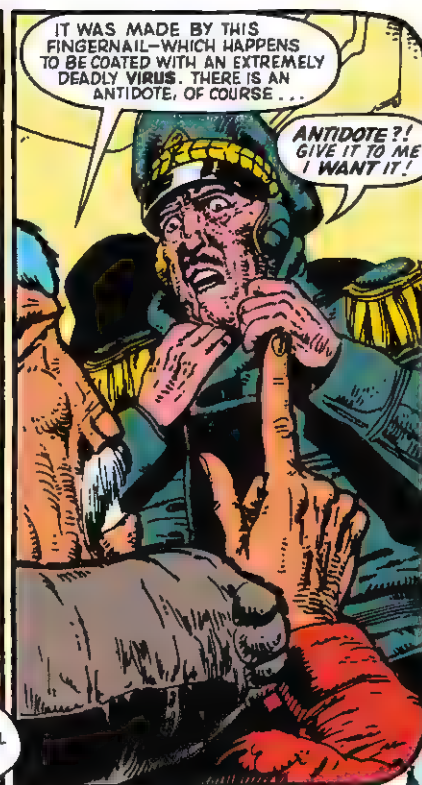
EH? SPEAK UP,
YOU MUMBLING
MORON!

I CANNOT SPEAK HIS
NAME ALOUD HERE. I MUST
WHISPER IT.. TO YOU..

... LIKE THIS!

UNFF!

I MANAGED TO MAKE
A SMALL SCRATCH ON
ZAPILOTE'S NECK BEFORE
THEY DRAGGED ME OFF HIM.



... AND BOLIVAR AND I WERE BACK AT CASTLE DE LA ROSA WITHIN TWO HOURS.

WHY DID YOU DELIVER THE ANTIDOTE? WHY NOT LET HIM DIE?

THE ANTIDOTE WAS ONLY STERILE WATER, DE TORRES. THE VIRUS WAS QUITE HARMLESS. HE'D HAVE RECOVERED IN FOUR HOURS, ANYWAY!

MY HUSBAND HAS THESE UNFORTUNATE QUALMS ABOUT KILLING PEOPLE. ANYWAY, NOW WE CAN ASSASSINATE ZAPILOTE'S CHARACTER. WATCH...

PRESIDENT ZAPILOTE CONTINUES TO RECOVER WELL FROM HIS ATTACK OF FOOD POISONING. WE ALL WISH HIM WELL...

THAT'S WHAT YOU THINK!

AS PART OF OUR CAMPAIGN TACTICS, WE HAD RE-WIRED PARAISO-AQUI'S COMMUNICATION SATELLITES. THIS MEANT WE COULD NOW CUT OUT ZAPILOTE'S BROADCASTS - AND SUBSTITUTE OUR OWN...

NICE PRODUCTION, ANGELINA. WE HAVE MORE...?

BUT LET US NOT DWELL ON THE SICK GUTS OF THAT SORDID LITTLE MAN! LET US FOLLOW THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN OF SIR HECTOR HARADO - HE WHO HAS ALREADY SURVIVED A NUMBER OF ASSASSINATION ATTEMPTS BY THIS BUG ZAPILOTE!

PLENTY! AND THE REAL PRESS ARRIVED THIS MORNING WHILE YOU WERE IN THE CITY...

"... I CHARTERED A SHIP AND BROUGHT IN ABOUT A HUNDRED CREWS FROM ALL OVER THE GALAXY. ZAPILOTE WILL HAVE TO BEHAVE OR THEY'LL SMEAR HIM ON EVERY PLANET KNOWN TO MAN. THERE'S A LIVE REPORT COMING UP NOW..."

HARAPOL WELCOMES
THE GALACTIC PRESS CORPS

AND THERE HAVE JUST BEEN
SENSATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS
IN THIS, THE MOST UNUSUAL
ELECTION CAMPAIGN IN THE
PAST TWO CENTURIES...

GENERAL PRESIDENT HAS
SUDDENLY DECIDED TO BRING
FORWARD THE ELECTION! POLLING
DAY WILL NOW TAKE PLACE TOMORROW
INSTEAD OF IN A MONTH'S TIME!

HE CAN'T! WE WON'T
HAVE THE TIME WE NEED
FOR THE TV CAMPAIGN—
WE'D NEVER WIN!

THEN WE'D
BETTER START
PLANNING
NOW.

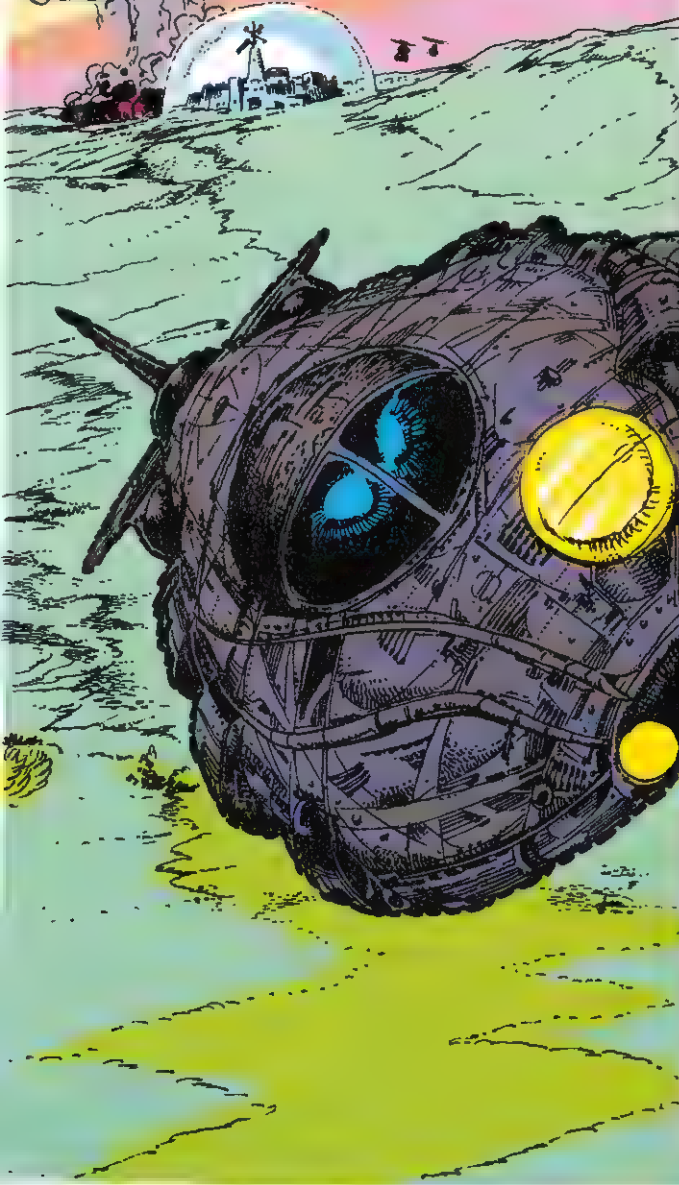
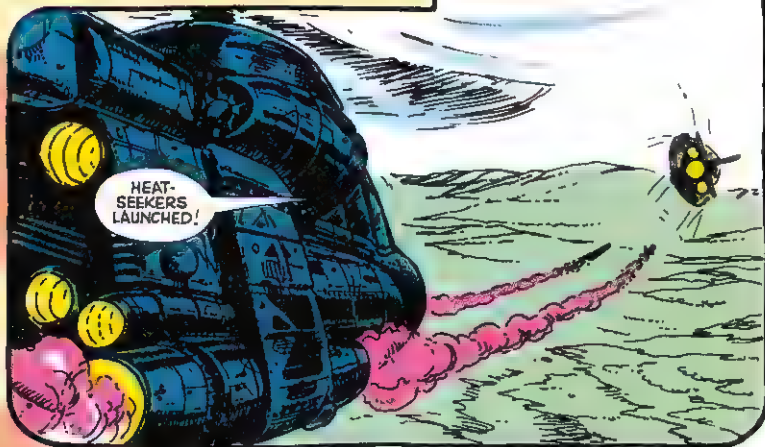
THERE'S
GOT TO BE
A WAY...

I FEAR NOT,
MY FRIEND.
WE HAVE ONLY
24 HOURS...

I SOUNDED
CONFIDENT—
I HAD TO
KEEP UP THE
MORALE OF
MY TROOPS.
IN FACT, I HAD
NO IDEA WHAT
WE WERE
GOING TO DO.

ELECTION DAY ON PARAISO-AQUI
DANNED WITH A **BANG**... TO BE
PRECISE, A **BIG BANG** WHEN
PRESIDENT ZAPILOTE'S FORCES
DECIDED TO **NUKE-OUT** OUR
ELECTION HEADQUARTERS...

JAMES AND BOLIVAR MADE SURE
ZAPILOTE'S SHIP DIDN'T GET A CHANCE
TO DEPLOY ITS CARGO OF LETHAL VIRUS
BOMBS IN A **FOLLOW-UP STRIKE**...



...WHICH WAS JUST AS WELL
THE FORCEFIELD THAT HAD
PROTECTED OUR HEADQUARTERS
AGAINST THE NUKE WOULD HAVE
BEEN NO USE AGAINST
BIOLOGICAL WARFARE.



ACTUALLY, I WAS SO BUSY LOOKING FOR LOOPHOLES IN PARASO-AQUI'S CONSTITUTION THAT I NEVER EVEN HEARD THE EXPLOSIONS.



THAT PIG ZAPILOTE IS TRYING TO WIPE US OUT! IT'S TIME WE REPLIED IN KIND!

WE SHALL, MY LOVE— BUT OUR WEAPONS WILL BE BRAINS, NOT BRAWN!



AS IT IS NOW IMPOSSIBLE TO WIN THE ELECTION, WE MUST BEAT ZAPILOTE BY LOSING IT!

WHAAT?



TRUST ME! FIRST, WE MUST VOTE!

I'M BEGINNING TO WONDER IF THAT CRAFT DID MANAGE TO DROP SOME CRAZY BUGS ON US ...

OUR LOCAL POLLING STATION WAS TORTOSA, JUST A FEW KAYS AWAY. WE ARRIVED COMPLETE WITH TV VAN AND SAT-LINK EQUIPMENT.



THE POLLS WERE JUST ABOUT TO CLOSE ...

HURRAY FOR SIR HECTOR!



TELL US, SIR HECTOR... ARE YOU CONFIDENT?

DO YOU PREDICT A WIN FOR YOUR PARTY?

OF COURSE! WITH OUR LOYAL AND COURAGEOUS SUPPORTERS BEHIND US, WE CANNOT LOSE. JUSTICE AND DEMOCRACY WILL TRIUMPH!

MY WORDS WERE SHEER BRAVADO. I KNEW THAT NO MATTER HOW MANY PEOPLE VOTED FOR US, ZAPILOTE WOULD FIX THINGS SO THAT HE WON.

AFTER VOTING ENDED, THE RESULTS QUICKLY CAME UP ON THE PUBLIC SCREEN.

THE FIGURES INDICATE A LANDSLIDE FOR ZAPILOTE. HE HAS TERRORISED ALL THE CITIZENS INTO VOTING FOR HIM.

IT'S HIS RIGGING OF THE COMPUTERS THAT REALLY COUNTS. AH, HERE COMES OUR LOCAL RESULT...

AND NOW THE TORTOSA RESULT! IT'S A MASSIVE VOTE FOR OUR BELOVED PRESIDENT— 5312 VOTES FOR ZAPILOTE; A PALTRY 2 FOR HARAPO!

FIX!

LIES!

FILTHY COCKROACH!

TORTOSA
ZAPILOTE
5312
HARAPO
2

IT WAS JUST WHAT I HAD BEEN WAITING FOR...

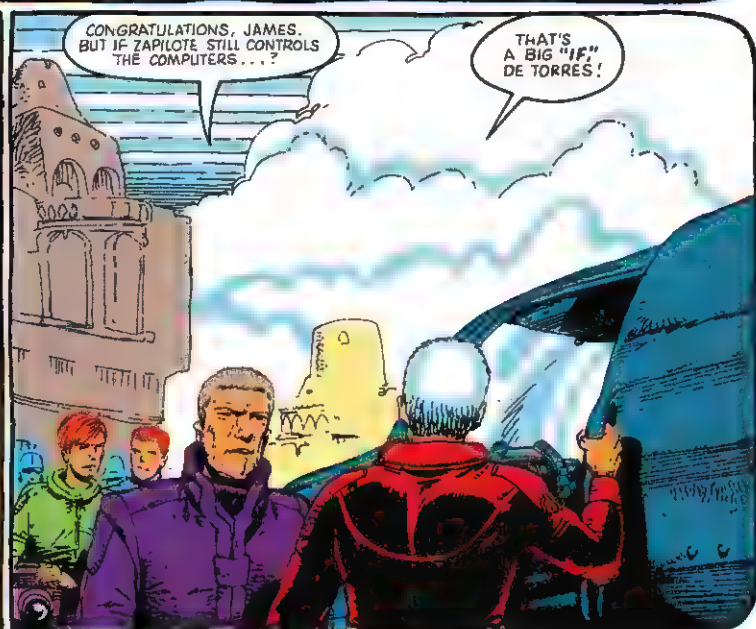
GREAT! JAMES, BOLIVAR— POWER UP THE SAT-LINK. ANGELINA— COVER ME AGAINST ATTACK BY ZAPILOTE'S HEAVIES!

I WENT ON THE AIR DIRECT TO THE WHOLE PLANET...

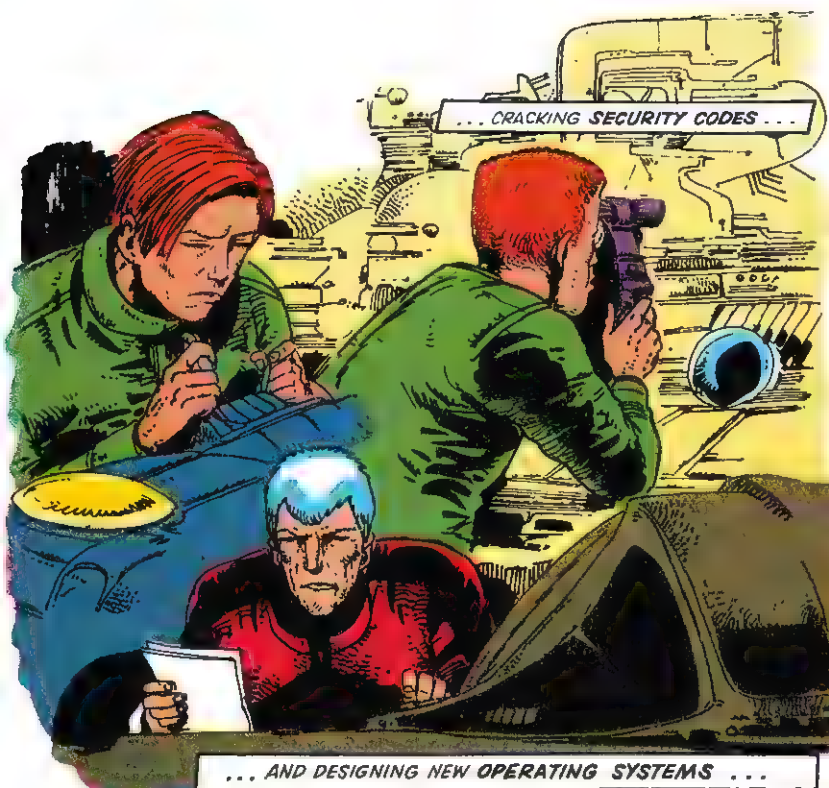
THIS IS SIR, HECTOR HARAPO, DIRECT FROM TORTOSA— WHERE I CAN PROVE THAT THE TREACHEROUS LOUSE ZAPILOTE HAS RIGGED THE VOTES!

KILL HIM! NOW!

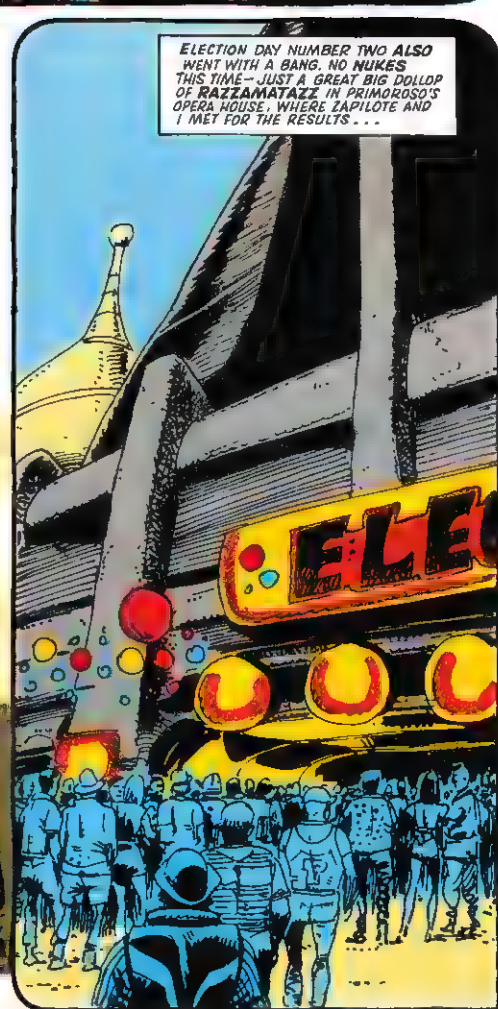
YOU EVEN BREATHE FUNNY AND I'LL BREAK YOU IN HALF!



WE SPENT THE TWO WEEKS
WRITING OUR OWN
RIGGING PROGRAM ...



... AND DESIGNING NEW OPERATING SYSTEMS ...



ZAPILOTE WAS WORRIED AS HELL. THE RESULTS WERE NECK AND NECK!

THE CUCARACHA RESULT—ZAPILOTE: 16; HARAPO: 985.

WHY DOES HE GET ANY VOTES IF WE FIXED THE COMPUTERS?

BECAUSE THIS IS A VERY FAIR "BENT" ELECTION. BESIDES, I WANT TO WATCH HIM SWEAT!

THE LAST RESULT CAME IN...

ZAPILOTE IS 75 VOTES AHEAD, AND THE LAST VOTING FIGURES ARE...

THERE WAS A MERE FLICKER AS OUR COMPUTER-GENERATED ANNOUNCER TOOK OVER FROM THE REAL GUY...

819 VOTES TO ZAPILOTE; 896 TO HARAPO! HARAPO WINS BY JUST TWO VOTES!

THANK YOU, MY FRIENDS! I AM A MODEST MAN, BUT THE PUBLIC HAS SPOKEN AND I WILL ANSWER...

AAAAAAAH!

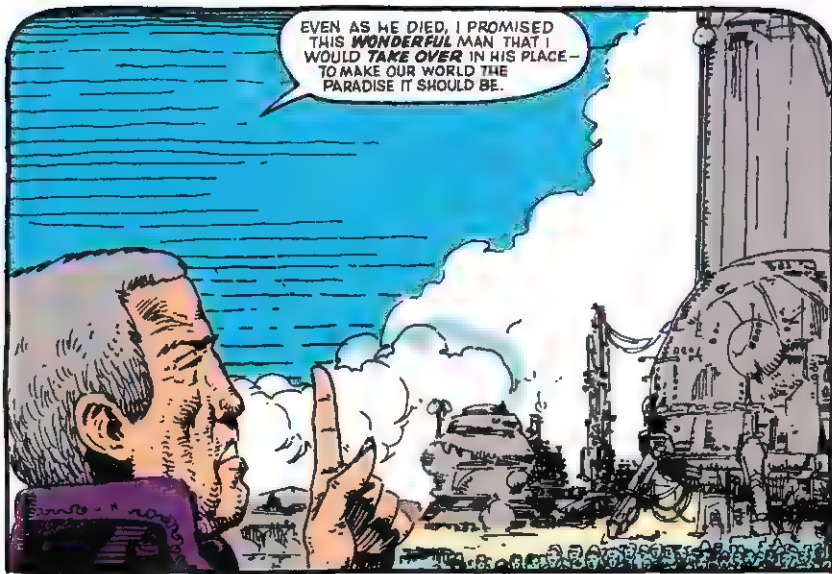
A WEEK LATER, DE TORRES UNVEILED A STATUE IN MEMORY OF ME.

PEOPLE OF PARAISO-AQUI, THIS IS A **SAD** DAY, AND A **HAPPY** DAY. **HAPPY**, BECAUSE WE START A NEW ERA OF **PEACE** AND **FREEDOM**... **SAD**, BECAUSE WE **MOURN** SIR HECTOR HARAPO, CRUELLY **ASSASSINATED** IN HIS HOUR OF **TRIUMPH**!



SIR HECTOR HARAPO

EVEN AS WE DIED, I PROMISED THIS **WONDERFUL** MAN THAT I WOULD **TAKE OVER** IN HIS PLACE—TO MAKE OUR WORLD THE **PARADISE** IT SHOULD BE.



WE HAVE LEARNT **MERCY**... A FAIR TRIAL HAS SENTENCED ZAPIOTE TO **EXILE** ON THE PRISON PLANET CALABOZO.



WHILE ON THE SPACEPORT, SIR HECTOR'S **WIDOW** LEAVES TO FIND A NEW WORLD. WE WILL NOT FORGET HER, NOR HER COURAGEOUS YOUNG SONS!



THIS WAY TO YOUR CABIN, MADAM.

WELL, THAT WAS A NEAT OPERATION... **BAD** GUYS LOCKED UP, **GOOD** GUYS IN CHARGE.

GIVE 'EM A COUPLE OF YEARS AND WE'LL PAY 'EM A RETURN VISIT—STARTING WITH A BANK OF COURSE!



IT WAS CLEARLY TIME TO RE-ESTABLISH MYSELF AS HEAD OF THE FAMILY...

I'LL DECIDE WHAT BANKS WE HIT, BOLIVAR—AND WHERE!

AND AS FOR YOU, JAMES, YOUR BULLET NEARLY PENETRATED MY ARMOUR-PLATED VEST. NEXT TIME, I'LL WEAR SOMETHING SPECIAL... LIKE STAINLESS STEEL!



The End How's RAT?



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MAR
No. 6

The Stainless Steel Rat

Based on the book by Harry Harrison.

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MY WIFE ALWAYS
HANDLES THE DOMESTIC
PROBLEMS!



The Stainless Steel Rat issue 6 cover, art by Carlos Ezquerro, 1986

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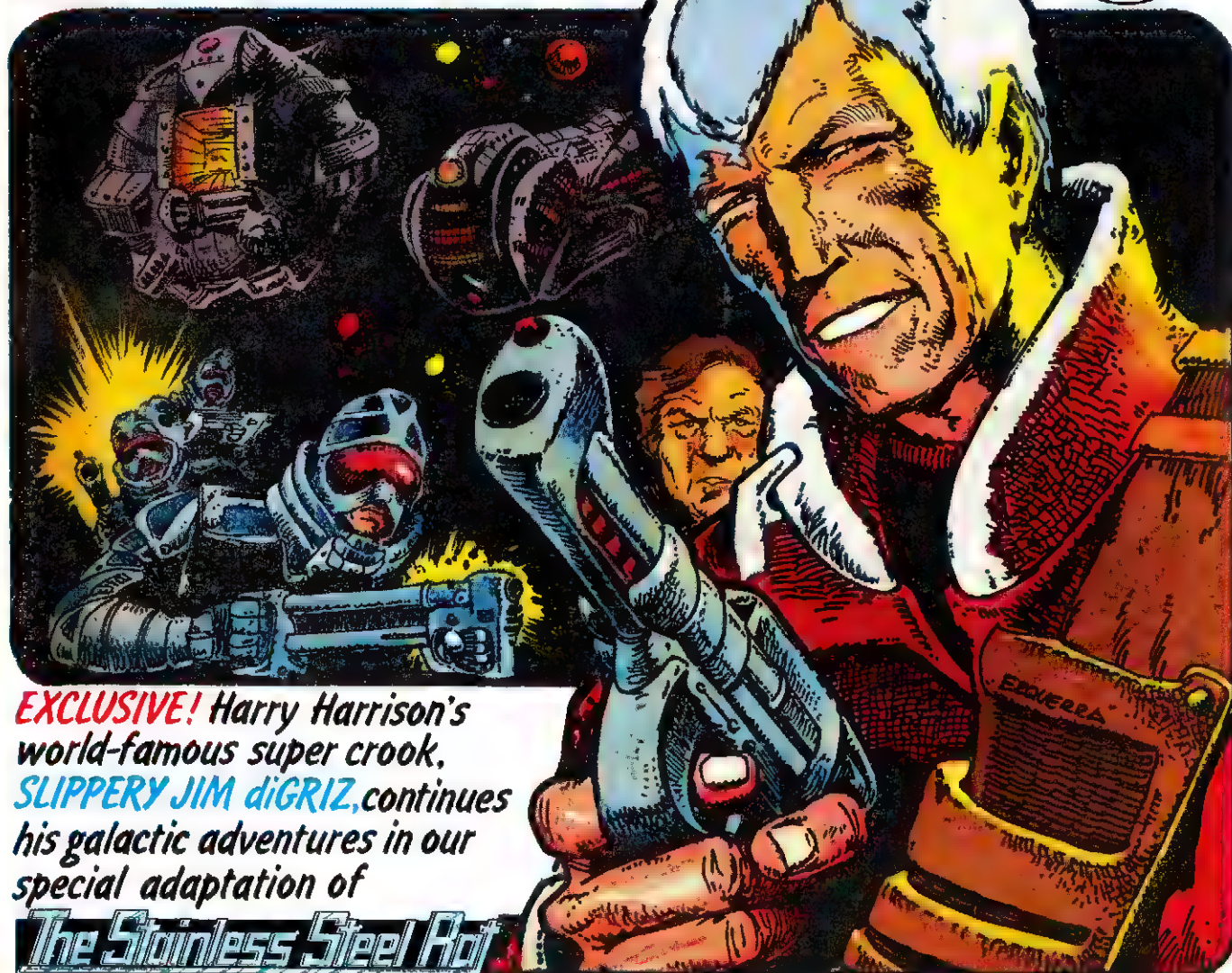
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DESIGN AN ALIEN
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"ANGELINA POINTED
THE .75 RECOILLESS AT
MY CHEST AND FOUR
SLUGS RIPPED INTO ME.
THEN SHE PUT A FIFTH
ONE IN MY HEAD FOR
GOOD MEASURE."

**THE STAINLESS
STEEL RAT WINDS
UP IN THE
MORTUARY, INSIDE!**

TO ACTIVATE

Borag Thungg, Earthshaker! Here is another zany pull-out poster for you to display on your bedroom wall. To detach the poster open the staples in the middle of the comic. Then, using a pair of sharp scissors, neatly trim off the sides up to the black line. Lastly, paste the poster on to a piece of cardboard which has been cut to size. Look out for another amazing cover poster soon!

PROG 393
24 NOV 84

MOVE OVER, RON-SLIPPERY JIM di GRIZ IS BACK!

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TO ACTIVATE

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**ANGELINA'S
ARMY RIDES TO WAR
IN THE MURDEROUS CLIMAX
OF THE STAINLESS STEEL RAT!**

Harry Harrison

Harry Harrison is the much-loved author of the **Stainless Steel Rat** and **Bill the Galactic Hero** novels. He was also a highly respected science-fiction critic and anthologist. Harry penned the story that inspired the classic SF film **Soylent Green**.

Kelvin Gosnell

Kelvin Gosnell served as **2000 AD**'s second editor, from Progs 17 to 85 (18th June 1977 – 7th October 1978). He also wrote *Blackhawk*, *Dan Dare*, *A Joe Black Adventure*, *Judge Dredd*, *One-Offs*, *Project Overkill*, *Ro-Jaws' Robo-Tales*, *The Stainless Steel Rat* and *Tharg's Future Shocks*, as well as co-writing the first series of *Flesh*.

Carlos Ezquerra

Carlos Ezquerra was the co-creator of *Judge Dredd*, *Strontium Dog*, *Rat Pack*, *Major Eazy* and many other fan-favourite characters, he designed the classic original Dredd costume as well as visually conceptualising Mega-City One. In addition to these credits he also illustrated *A.B.C. Warriors*, *Judge Anderson*, *Tharg the Mighty*, and *Cursed Earth Koburn* amongst many other stories. Outside of the 'Galaxy's Greatest Comic', Ezquerra illustrated the first *Third World War* episodes in **Crisis** magazine, and became a regular collaborator with Garth Ennis, working on **Adventures in the Rifle Brigade**, **Bloody Mary**, **Just a Pilgrim**, **Condors**, **The Magnificent Kevin** and two special **Preacher** episodes. He died in 2018 but his profound influence on the world of comic art cannot be overstated.



The 2000 AD adaptation of three of Harry Harrison's science-fiction classic novels by Kelvin Gosnell and Carlos Ezquerra is back in a new full color omnibus!

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The Rat must travel through time to stop a master criminal meddling with the past, and then later help to overthrow an evil President by becoming a candidate for the job himself!

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THE RAT IN COLOR!



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